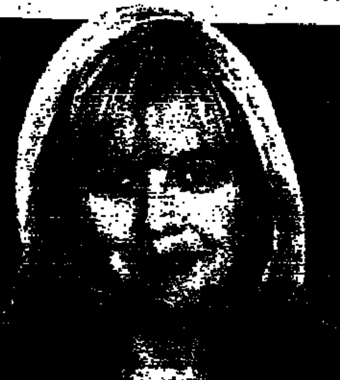
THE TIMES

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Easy Money It pays to read Anne Ashworth's new column page 17



Keegan: quit while you're ahead Simon Barnes page 44

Turtles on the highway of love page 18

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Serb peace offer 'a chess move'

Russians fail to engineer a breakthrough

BY MICHAEL EVANS, TOM WALKER IN BELGRADE AND ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE peace mission to Belgrade by Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Prime Minister, failed to produce a breakthrough last night to bring an end to the Serb aggression in Kosovo.

After six hours of talks between Mr Primakov and President Milosevic, the Yugoslav leader offered to start reducing his forces in Kosovo if Nato first stopped bombing. He also said ethnic Albanian refugees could return freely to their homes but demanded that Nato stopped backing the Kosovo Liberation Army.

However, after being briefed in Bonn by Mr Primakov on the "peace offer", the German Chancellor, Gerhard Schröeder, said there was no deal. The proposal to withdraw Serb troops from Kosovo in return for an end to Nato bombing was "no basis for a political solution".

OPINION

'Milosevic made his first offer last night — an offer hedged with conditions that would have been unacceptable even before his forces had put most of Kosovo to the torch'

Leading article, page 21

The first step, he said, was to stop the killing in Kosovo immediately. President Clinton also said that Nato would press on with the airstrikes and a spokesman for Tony Blair said: "It's action, not words, that count."

Nato stepped up its activity, beginning 24-hour bombing raids on Serb troops and tanks engaged in the ethnic-cleansing attacks. RAF Harrier GR7s took part in bombing raids for the first time in daylight.

Mr Primakov, accompanied by Igor Ivanov, the Russian Foreign Minister, had been sent to Belgrade by President Yeltsin to try to negotiate an agreement that would stop Nato's bombing campaign. However, as the meeting was underway Serb forces continued with their ethnic-cleansing operations. Nato reported that Serbs had fired on a column of refugees with tanks and artillery.

Mr Primakov tried to persuade Nato that the Yugoslav president was ready to back down on Kosovo. But German defence sources said: "We have had similar peace offerings from Mr Milosevic in the past and they are rarely authentic. This is a chess move."

Mr Primakov spoke of a six-point peace plan, which would include an end to military action in Kosovo, the withdrawal of all or some of the Serb units and an agreement to allow the refugees back to their homes. In return, Nato would be expected to stop its air strikes and lift economic sanctions.

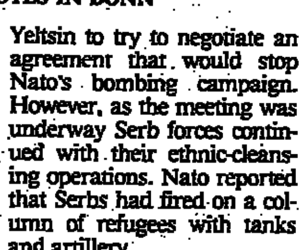
Mr Milosevic accused Nato of starting a war and said that the Yugoslav Army was defending the nation: "It's not the first time the people of Yugoslavia have had to defend their identity and territorial sovereignty and integrity," he said.

The problem, he said, "can be solved by political means and not by dropping 1,000 tons of bombs. We are for a political solution but aggression must first stop."

Nato is considering expanding the airstrikes to include widescale attacks on targets throughout the whole of Yugoslavia — the so-called third phase of the air campaign. Sir Charles Guthrie, the Chief of the Defence Staff, admitted that the Nato air campaign was proceeding more slowly than desired, but said "no one ever said we would be able to achieve this overnight. It took [THE SERBS]many years to assemble and it can't be disabled as quickly as we would like."

The discussions about wider targeting came as reports emerged of Serb forces opening fire with tanks and artillery on one column of refugees trying to leave Kosovo for Albania.

In another incident, reported by Nato, civilians from one town in Kosoyo had been sent on a forced march to the Albanian border. "If these reports are confirmed it is something we haven't seen since the forced evacuation of Phnom Penh by the Khmer Rouge," Jamie Shgea, the Nato spokesman, said.





Milosevic welcoming the Russian Prime Minister, Yevgeni Primakov, to Belgrade for talks yesterday. The resultant Serb "peace offer" was dismissed

Thousands of ethnic Albanians also began leaving the capital city of Pristina yesterday. Nato said a total of 118,000 people had left Kosovo since last Wednesday, when alliance bombing began. The Albanian Government said 60,000 refugees had entered the country in the past 36 hours.

Earlier George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, announced that he would be making available RAF transport aircraft to ferry aid to the Balkan countries now being swamped with refugees.

Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, advised the refugees to wait for when they could return to their homes. She said if they came to Britain, it would be an admission that President Milosevic had won.

Reports, pages 2-7
Richard Beeston, page 20
Leading article and letters, page 21

THE WAR THIS WEEK

- Sunday night/Monday: Nato launches Phase Two operation after clearing a path through Serbian air defences with Phase One. Air attacks carried out against Serbian units.
- Monday: Nato reports swelling exodus of refugees into Albania as Serbs practise scorched earth policy, destroying towns and killing population. A third of the Kosovo-Albanian population has now been forced out of their homes.
- Nato says Phase Two operations continuing round clock in a race to stop Serbians. Bad weather hampers missions. Nato denies any plan for ground operations.
- Russia says it is sending Yevgeny Primakov to negotiate with Belgrade.
- Tuesday: as air offensive continues, Nato accuses Milosevic of instituting "a modern version of the Great Terror", driving out the population on a scale comparable to the 1970s Khmer Rouge evacuation of Pnomh Penh.
- Primakov meets Milosevic and flies to Bonn saying that the Serbian President is offering ceasefire terms. These are said to include partial withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo, an international monitoring force and return of refugees.
- In Brussels, Javier Solana, Nato Secretary-General, softens Nato demands for Serbian agreement to the Rambouillet peace accord and opens door to a deal, saying the Alliance's top goal is to "stop the killing". Refugees must return, he said.

Britain cool on offer from 'serial breaker of promises'

BY PHILIP WEBSTER POLITICAL EDITOR

BRITAIN reacted coolly last night to President Milosevic's attempt to get Nato to call off its air strikes.

Senior government sources played down suggestions of any breakthrough after the talks between Yevgeny Primakov, the Russian Prime Minister, and Mr Milosevic.

Downing Street and the Foreign Office said: "We want action not words." Tony Blair and Robin Cook were awaiting a full briefing from the Russians on the outcome of the talks. The Foreign Office said Mr Cook was waiting for a "full read-out".

Senior government sources said that a conditional offer was unlikely to be acceptable to Nato. The new proposals did not appear to be a breakthrough because Mr Milosevic was a "serial breaker of promises".

The Foreign Office said: "So far Milosevic has given no sign that he is serious about a permanent end to repression and violence in Kosovo." A spokesman added: "Until he demonstrates that he is serious we will continue with the Nato air strikes."

Diplomats had been braced yesterday for some kind of claimed movement to emerge from the Primakov-Milosevic talks. Ministers have no intention of calling off the raid until it is clear that Mr Milosevic has stopped the attacks on the Kosovar Albanians and agreed that a ceasefire should be monitored, something that he would regard as a humiliation.

Mr Cook told Channel 4 News that any ceasefire must be guaranteed by an international military presence. He and Mr Blair stepped up the Government campaign to win public support for a prolonged bombing campaign, stressing that the Serb repression must be countered by an intensification of air strikes.

William Hague said that it was disturbing that Britain and its allies had apparently made little or no preparations to deal with the wave of refugees.

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Player's chance not snookered by jail

BY PHIL YATES AND ADAM FRESCO

WHEN your opponent in the world snooker championships has been imprisoned for four months, most players would expect a bye into the next round.

However, in a move more reminiscent of Monopoly than snooker, Dean Reynolds, jailed in December for a drink-driving offence, has not only got out of jail but has also been able to alter the terms of his curfew so that he has a chance of completing his match.

John Read, his scheduled opponent in the seventh round of the Embassy World Snooker Championship, must have been relishing an easy passage into the next round until Reynolds was released early on March 19 from Morton Hall Open Prison in Lincolnshire.

All was not lost for Read's automatic victory though, as Reynolds, formerly ranked eighth in the world, was electronically tagged and placed under curfew. The ruling was that he had to be home at 7pm, well before most snooker matches are decided.

The first nine frames of the match were due to be played at 10am yesterday, with the closing ten frames scheduled to be completed at 7pm.

But Reynolds has managed to avoid getting himself well and truly snookered and has persuaded the authorities to allow him to break the rules so he can compete in the £1.4 million competition.

The player had already been forced to withdraw from the recent Thailand Masters in Bangkok. He was helped this time by a supportive letter to his prison governor from the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, which emphasised the importance of his participation in the championship and explained the unconventional working hours of its members.

At the 11th hour the authorities decided that special dispensation would be given for Reynolds to break his curfew and so Reynolds set off for the Shropshire venue.

Any time over the 7pm curfew that he takes will be added on to the end of his sentence.

By overcoming Read, Reynolds would guarantee himself a minimum £6,000. If he reaches the final qualifying round on Friday, he will play Jimmy White for at least £12,500 and a place in the first round draw, which takes place on BBC's *Grandstand* on Saturday.

Reynolds's curfew is due to expire on April 16: the eve of the televised stages of the world championship at The Crucible, Sheffield.

Reynolds is a former quarter finalist in the world championship.

European rates crisis

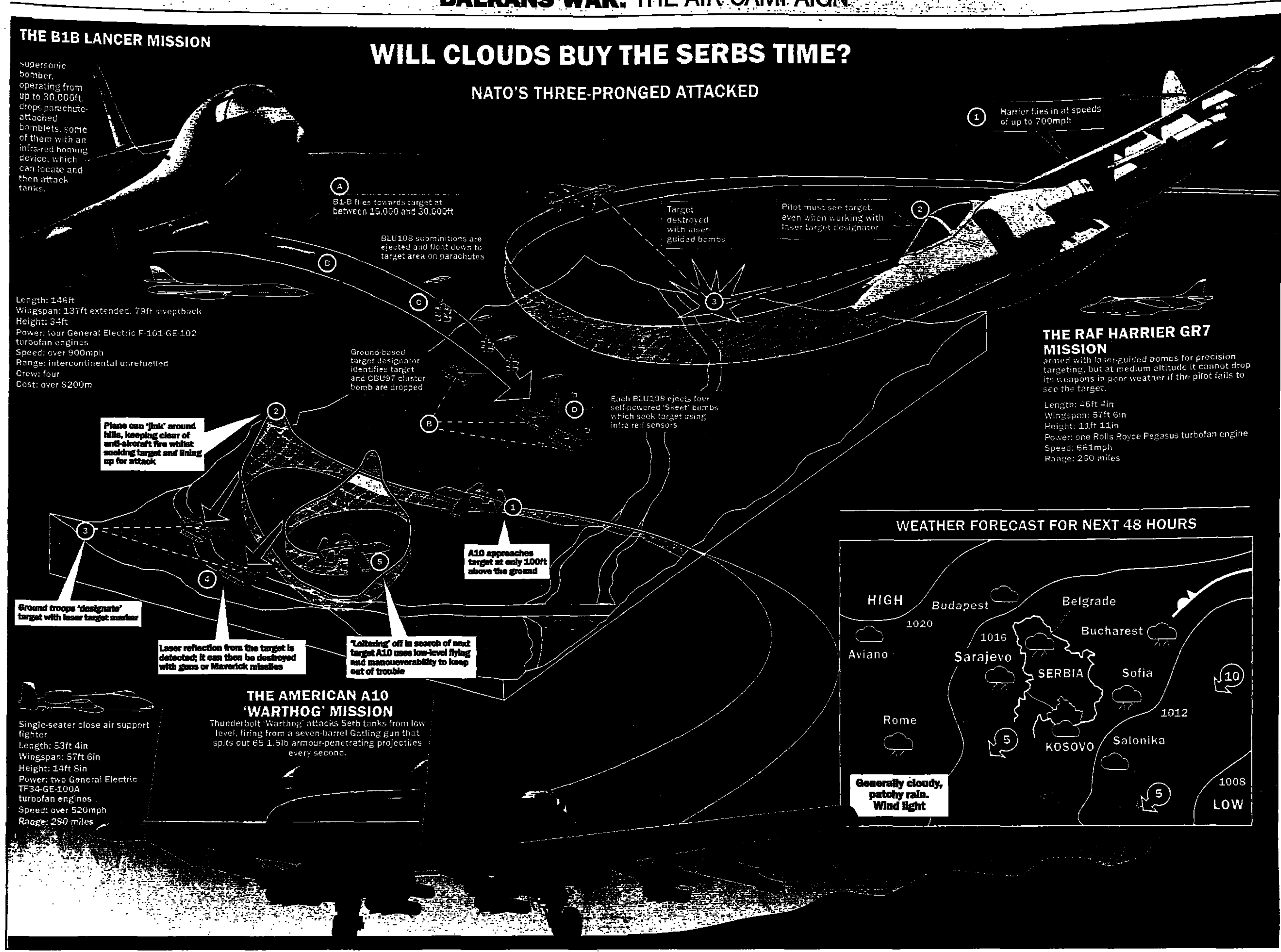
The European Commission yesterday increased pressure on the European Central Bank to cut interest rates but triggered a row with Germany over a sharp downgrade to the country's growth figures.

The Commission cuts its forecast for euroland growth from 2.6 per cent to 2.2 per cent and also reduced its inflation predictions......Page 25

Legal battle

Four alleged terrorists won a landmark ruling that paves the way for a host of legal challenges under the Human Rights Act 1998 which enshrined the European Human Rights Convention into British law......Page 10

BALKANS WAR: THE AIR CAMPAIGN



Weather holds up the bombs

Low cloud has forced Nato to rethink its strategy, writes Michael Evans

NATO has had to rethink its air campaign strategy because appalling weather conditions over Yugoslavia have been hampering medium-level, precision-guided bombing missions. The accelerated "ethnic cleansing" by the Serbs has also made it imperative to deploy aircraft capable of hitting tanks, troops and artillery.

After less than a week of bombing, mostly at night, both the United States and Britain have had to send more aircraft, because the bombers already there have been unable to deter the Serb forces from continuing their genocidal operations in Kosovo.

This is largely because the focus has been on eliminating the Serbs' comprehensive air defences. The French claimed yesterday that Nato had destroyed 50 per cent of Yugoslavia's air defence systems.

However, unlike the Gulf War when the US-led coalition had time on its side to complete one phase of the bombing before moving on to the next, Operation Allied Force has been different.

If the Nato planners imagined the Serb forces in Kosovo would take cover and delay their ethnic cleansing while the bombers attacked the large targets, they miscalculated. The opposite has been the case. While strategic bombing was important to reduce the risk for allied pilots, the priority in this particular campaign is a tactical one: targeting Serb troops and armour in Kosovo.

It has been unfortunate that during the six days of strategic bombing the sorties have been plagued by low cloud cover and thick mist. Many of the Nato aircraft operating from medium altitude and launching laser-guided bombs have been unable to fire their weapons because in order to designate a target with a laser beam the pilot must be able to see it to guarantee an accurate hit.

With poor weather predicted for some time to come and no end to the ethnic cleansing, Nato commanders have had to ask for different weapon systems and start low-level bombing earlier than planned, increasing the risks for pilots.

The RAF Harrier GR7s are quite capable of operating at low level, but so far have flown exclusively at medium level, although only prosecuting their missions successfully when favourable weather has allowed.

General Sir Charles Guthrie, the Chief of the Defence Staff, said yesterday: "Smart technology is affected by poor weather and we have had a run of very poor weather."

Now Britain is preparing eight Tornado GR1 bombers to join Operation Allied Force. Although the Tornado and Harrier have similar capabilities — they can operate day and night — there are two key differences: the Tornado is an all-weather aircraft and while the pilot still has to see the target, the bomber has terrain-following radar, making it less risky to fly at low level.

Indeed, a Tornado pilot generally prefers to fly in bad weather because if he is at low level in poor visibility it means the enemy will have difficulty in spotting him.

No one doubts the courage of the Harrier pilots, but since weather conditions in the Balkans are notoriously bad and look set to be poor for the next week or so, it is difficult to see why the Tornados were not brought in from the beginning. Even now, it will be several days before all eight aircraft are ready for operations.

In the same way, the Americans have also decided to send more aircraft, including five B1B bombers which are armed with anti-armour cluster bomblets and can launch their weapons with incredible accuracy with the help of a "differential" Global Positioning System on board that takes precise grid references from 12 separate satellites. The supersonic swing-wing bomber is capable of penetrating sophisticated air defences and from 15,000ft to 25,000ft it can drop its cluster-bomb payload on to Serb tanks with precision and without ground-based navigation aids. If there is thick cloud cover, however, the targeting will have to be assisted by "forward air controllers" covertly deployed.

It can be assumed that these controllers are operating in Kosovo, armed with laser target markers to pinpoint Serb tanks and artillery. For small targets such as tanks, the ground-based specialist plays a crucial role.

The deployment of another five American EA6B Prowler electronic warfare aircraft to the region underlines the dilemma of the Nato planners. Unable to continue devoting most of the aircraft to hitting Serb air defences, because of the changing priority towards tactical bombing, the only answer has been to fly more of these specialised aircraft that can jam Serb radars.

Nevertheless, judging by the way the Serbs have reacted to the bombing on the ground, the successes of the first six days of Operation Allied Force have failed to have any impact on the rapid progress of the ethnic cleansing operation.

NATURE'S VAGARIES CAUSE MORE PROBLEMS IN A HIGH-TECH ERA


Lancaster bomber, used in the Second World War

BAD weather has always affected flying in wartime but modern technology, ironically, has made it worse (Michael Evans writes).

In the Second World War, there was no such weapon as a laser-guided smart bomb. Dresden was not targeted with precision. It was carpet-bombed indiscriminately. B52s in the Vietnam War also carpet-bombed. Today battlefield strategy is all about precision-bombing. The military care about "collateral damage" — the need to avoid killing civilians.

In the Second World War, pilots could bomb blind, but without knowing for sure that they had hit the right targets. For Operation Allied Force, pilots have been given strict rules of engagement: if they cannot see the target, they must abort their mission.

Pilots days away from clear view

By Nigel Hawkes, science editor

CLOUDY weather seems likely to disrupt the Nato air campaign against Serbia for several days yet. The Meteorological Office yesterday declined to issue any forecasts for Serbia and Kosovo, on the ground that during a war a weather forecast is an item of intelligence.

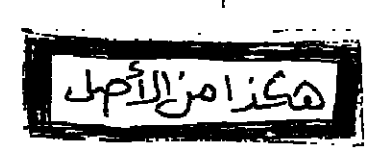
The spokesman even declined to say whether cloudy weather, which has so far prevented British pilots from completing their missions on four of the six nights of the campaign, was typical for the Balkans at this time of year. But anyone with access to the Internet can get immediate access to forecasts and satellite pictures which show just how frustrating the weather is proving to be.

A heavy layer of cloud lies over the Balkans in what appears to be a settled pattern. Professor Brian Hoskins of the Department of Meteorology at Reading University says that at this time of year the Balkan weather is in a period of transition between the winter and summer patterns, making prediction difficult.

But rather than the variability which might be expected in such a transition, the pattern this year seems fairly settled. "I have had a quick look at the charts, and basically nothing is changing," he said. "I do not expect an abrupt change in the weather in the next few days." Yugoslav television is also forecasting cloudy weather for the next few days.

US forecasts provided by Weathernews Inc and available on the Net tell the same story. Their forecast for Belgrade over the next four days is little different from yesterday's weather, which was partly cloudy with a high of 61F (16C) and a low of 39F (4C). Today is expected to be very similar; on Thursday the forecast is for showers. Friday and Saturday are expected to be partly cloudy, with temperatures not very different from yesterday's. Further south in Kosovo the picture is much the same.

While this does not rule out the possibility of Nato aircraft finding clearances in the cloud, it rather looks as if the frustration will continue up to the weekend.

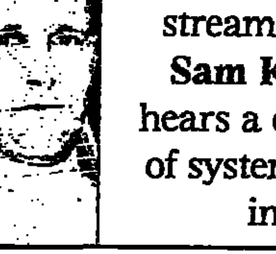




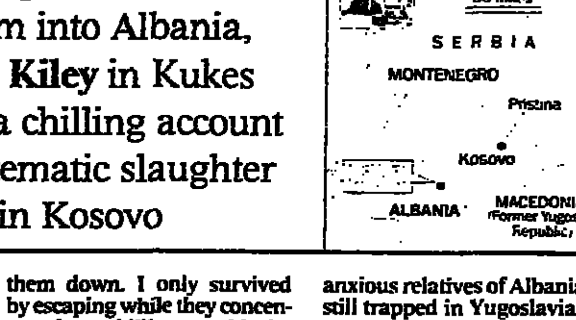


Safe: the Mitas in Blace, Macedonia, after forsaking their home in Pristina *Photograph: Simon Walker*

Nato likens 'cleansing' to Khmer Rouge terror



As refugees continue to stream into Albania, **Sam Kiley** in Kukes hears a chilling account of systematic slaughter in Kosovo



Thousands more Albanians flooded out of Kosovo yesterday as Nato accused Yugoslavia of waging a genocidal war comparable with the horrors of the Khmer Rouge and said that it had information that refugees trapped in a valley had been shelled by artillery and tanks.

The latest flood of refugees, about 4,500 people, arrived in Kukes yesterday afternoon. Again they told horrific stories of how they had been driven from their homes, and again their homes had been burnt.

But as Nato upped the stakes in the Kosovo conflict by shifting to attacking "secondary targets" with A10 tank-killing aircraft and promising to destroy Serbian units engaged in "ethnic re-engineering", Jamie Shea, the Nato spokesman, said that the alliance had received information that the Serbs were increasing their already high levels of mass murder.

Mr Shea said that the Serbs had launched a "Great Terror" against Kosovo's Albanian population.

The southern Serbian province's second city of Pec, with a population of 100,000, had been "almost totally destroyed", Mr Shea said.

He added that thousands of ethnic Albanians from the town of Prizren in southern Kosovo had been put on a forced march towards the Albanian border.

"If these reports are confirmed . . . this is something that we haven't seen since the forced evacuation of Phnom Penh in Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge during the 1970s," Mr Shea said.

Refugees from Prizren have been pouring into Albania for two days.

One, Liman Thaci, an imam from the village of Brestovac, staggered into Kukes devastated by what he had seen. Six days ago his village was surrounded by Serbs who opened fire upon the houses with artillery. He took cover in a ditch, which saved him to give the most compelling testimony of systematic slaughter heard so far.

"The Serbs rounded up all the young men. There were about 35 people that I knew who were held in the main square of our village. The Serbs then started cutting off their noses and their ears. Then they broke their legs with rifle butts, and then shot them down. I only survived by escaping while they concentrated on killing," said the imam, who brought with him a list of the men he watched die.

He fled into the surrounding mountains where he joined about 3,000 other refugees. Then the Serbs came again, killed three more men, and forced the survivors on to buses and trucks to take them to the Albanian border.

Air Commodore David Wilby, Nato's military spokesman, yesterday said that the level of this sort of atrocity was being expanded by the Serbs.

Near the town of Urosevac, he said, Nato had unconfirmed reports that refugees were being shelled with heavy weapons.

Yesterday the roar of Nato aircraft high in the skies over Kosovo could be clearly heard from the border with Albania near Kukes while Serb infantry trained their weapons on anxious relatives of Albanians still trapped in Yugoslavia.

But few appear to have been spared the clear-out. Young men who have not fled to join the Kosovo Liberation Army have been lucky to join the refugees. Old men face execution if they are unable to leave their homes.

Yesterday the last Albanian left in Dobrus, about a mile from the Kosovo-Albania border, was forced out of his home.

Ibrahim Saramati, bent with age, was ordered out of his home on pain of death. His walking stick tapped a lonely retreat on the concrete road between Kosovo and Albania as Serb police waved him off with a dismissive back hand.

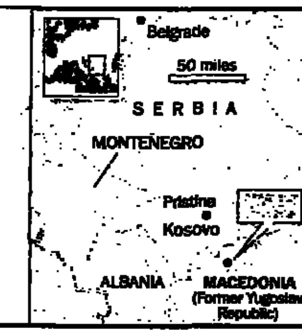
His son, who fled two days before, was waiting to greet him: their reunion would have been moving, had it not been so pathetic. "I'll go back just to get rid of the Serbs," said the old farmer.



Family's fate lay in a child's shoe



Daniel McGrory hears the story of one family's 24-hour drive to the safety of Blace, on the border between Kosovo and Macedonia



THE Mita family's life savings were hidden in the shoe of four-year-old Gem. His parents told their youngest son he had to pretend to be asleep any time they ran into Serb gunmen at road blocks on their escape from Kosovo.

Blenim Mita had agonised for five days about whether to abandon his successful car business in Pristina, but when a Serb neighbour called on the family a couple of nights ago his mind was made up. "I have known this man all my life, but there he was in my home where our families regularly eat together, holding a gun and telling me we should go right away or Arkan's paramilitaries will slit our throats."

Mr Mita, 44, discussed the ultimatum with his wife, Atije, a teacher and his brother, Luz, who had a bakery and shared the three-storey villa built by their father. They elected to run, but it took more than 24 hours to cover the 50 miles to the border where they crossed yesterday, exhausted and uncertain of where to go next.

When the Nato airstrikes began, Mr Mita said, the family barricaded themselves inside their home, their phones and electricity cut off.

But they were unable to sleep because of the explosions outside. Through the shutters, he said, he watched homes and offices of fellow ethnic Albanians picked clean by looters the minute the occupants left.

The Serbs are embarked on a systematic campaign to drive out Pristina's professional classes, like the Mitas, and make sure that businessmen, teachers and professional classes can never return.

"All this started 20 years ago," he added. "They closed my wife's school to Albanians, so she's been teaching children at our home." A tall, soft-spoken figure, he recounted how the couple first met at school.

"My wife was among the cleverest, so she was taught Russian. I was at the bottom end of class, so I learnt English."

After university the couple married and went into teaching. "Twelve years ago a Serb was given my job, so I started my own car business and was earning around £1,000 a month, which is good money in Pristina." Looking back over his shoulder, he jabbed his thumb towards the hills of Kosovo and said: "Life there is finished for me now. Part of me wanted to defend my work. It was also a gamble whether we would be any safer making a dash for the border than hiding in our home."

Mr Mita retrieved the DM20,000 (almost £7,000) from under the sole of one of his son's trainers and said: "We are lucky we didn't lose this."

On the edge of Pristina, Mr Mita's silver Audi Qatro was stopped and he was forced to pay DM1,000. "I saw a friend who could not find his money in time. The soldiers pulled him out of the car with his family and hit them, even the children. The Serbs then took his car and told them to walk."

Mr Mita had to pay three more bribes, the last one to a Macedonian guard who made them wait nine hours to cross the border.

Stretched out behind them were another 2,000 vehicles, including his brother, his wife and their three chidren. For another two hours Mr Mita parked at the roadside and waited.

"We were so afraid the Macedonians might suddenly close the border or send them back." When he saw his brother's BMW ease through the crossing post, the two men embraced in the middle of the road, tears of relief rolling down their cheeks.

Their faces were grey with fatigue and fear. Luz, 42, said: "At times I never thought we would make it, but if it takes the rest of my life I will go back. That is my home and no one has a right to take it from me."

Even before he left, neighbours told how his thriving bakery business had been seized by Serbs who worked for him. A half-eaten loaf he had baked lay on the back shelf of his car — all his family had taken to eat on their journey. Only now they were safe did the brothers begin a roadside conference about where to rebuild their lives.

Mr Mita said: "We will use our money to rent an apartment in Skopje, or failing that we will go to Turkey or anywhere that will have us, and we will work hard to start all over again."

His daughter Liseta, 13, had heard graphic stories of what Serb soldiers had done to girls of her age and sat mute for the entire journey, an anorak covering her face. Twelve-year-old Zgin admitted that he was scared of being shot, while his younger brother, Gem, just complained about the discomfort caused by the wedge of money stashed under his heel.

Their mother, Atije, 44, said: "The Serbs have dropped their version of the neutron bomb. Our city, our businesses and homes are still there, but the people are disappearing. Half of Pristina is empty."

Mr Mita watched refugees from farming villages slowly walking down the mountainside and said: "It doesn't matter how rich you are, we are all refugees."

A few hours previously one of Kosovo's richer businessmen had been escorted to the border by a Serb police convoy and moved to the front of the queue. The man had reportedly handed his many interests in Gnjilane to the city's police chief in return for a safe passage.

There was no one from any aid organisation or the Macedonian Government at the border yesterday to help the likes of the Mita family. But officials in Skopje have denied suggestions that they will allow only professionals to stay and try to move on the poorer refugees.

The local Albanian community was calling on every family in the capital to take in refugees. One of its leaders said: "Rich or poor they have all lost their homes and are suffering. What none of us know is how many more are still to come."

ON OTHER PAGES

Cries of despair echo on the Net

A website war of words is raging, writes **Damian Whitworth**

A CLICK of the mouse and the vivid snapshots of despair go round the world.

"There are many executions going on."

"The Serbs burned the house of R.S. He lived near the factory."

"I am sitting in the dark because it is an air raid. Maybe a Tomahawk will hit us."

With journalists banned from Kosovo and forced to rely on the accounts of wretched refugees pouring over the borders, the Internet has replaced crackling telephone lines as the most effective means of relaying eyewitness reports to the outside world.

As well as sending private messages to family and friends, those with access to computers have been clogging Internet chat rooms to bring their stories to wider audiences.

And both sides in the conflict have been fighting the first Internet war on their own websites, competing to win the propaganda battle.

"Our friends in Gjakova have gone silent. They are killing people there and we fear for them," a woman from Pristina wrote on one chat site.

An e-mail from a doctor in Gjakova, received by *The Washington Post*, described the scene in the town.

"There are many executions going on. I didn't manage to make my family flee, so I am very concerned about their safety. You remember the doctor. He was executed last night. All old part of Gjakova burnt down. Several families are executed ... Bajram Kelmendi with his two sons is executed."

As a means of smuggling out information it is so much easier than the coded radio messages or midnight plane pick-ups on isolated beaches favoured by French Resistance fighters during the Second World War.

LINKS

http://www.informatron.com/realtest.htm — Links to sites covering the Kosovo crisis and "chat room", an area in an Internet link provider's service where users can communicate directly with others who share the same interests.

http://www.mod.uk/news/kosovo — Ministry of Defence site dedicated to Kosovo conflict, with speeches by ministers, maps, balance of forces, chronology and UN resolutions

http://www.mediacenter.org — Pristina-based agency giving news and analysis from Serb point of view

http://www.zik.com/rabrika.htm — Kosovo Liberation Army website offering KLA declarations, interviews and chronology.

http://www.iwpr.net — Institute for War and Peace Reporting. Independent group with wide range of reports on war, human rights, censorship.

But there have been reports of hitherto busy Internet correspondents going silent suddenly. The information flowing out is often sketchy, occasionally faintly hilarious.

A woman from Sabac in southern Serbia described a crater "as big as a house" made by a stray bomb.

"The peasants had gone into the hole and were looking around. The man whose cornfield this was said he was going to charge tickets for those who wanted to see the hole."

The Serbs have been filling their websites with virulent attacks on the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) guerrillas, branding them as terrorists, and claiming that they are using the Nato raids as a cover to step up their own attacks.

In return, the KLA has posted a picture on its website of a baby that it claims was slain by Serb paramilitaries, and displayed e-mail messages from Kosovo Albanians recounting alleged atrocities. One, from a man to his friend, read:

"In Podujeva the situation is bad. We spoke to Uncle I last night and he said that the area of the city towards the brick factory was on fire.

"The Serbs burned down the house of R.S. He lived near the factory. Uncle I said that there are armed Serb paramilitary groups all over the city. He said that he has no idea where his family is.

"I hope this ends quick, and at the end... the people of Kosovo get to see some freedom. After all, I'd rather die from Nato bombs than from Serbian tortures, rapes, massacres."

In one "chat room" Yugoslavs on both sides, as well as an American soldier, all argued together. To the rallying cry "Serbian Brothers we are with you", the American paratrooper responded:

"I am a highly trained, highly motivated American killer. I train daily to give the enemy the best opportunity to give their lives for their country.

"I long to destroy any and all who stand in the way of democracy. If ground forces are sent to Kosovo I can only hope that my unit is called.

"I long to see and smell the blood of our enemys. (sic) Serbia is just that ... an American enemy. Warn your ill train, and ill equipt soldiers that many more of me feel this way. To all of the Serbs that read this comment ... may God help you!"

Visnja from Belgrade contributed:

"Presently (sic) I am sitting up in a high building where I live now, surfing the Internet.

"Everything is completely dark, and my room is in darkness because it is an air raid time now. Since my building is very tall maybe a Tomahawk will hit it by accident.

"But who cares? This is no time to be against anything. We have to sit in our shelters and listen to patriot songs ... There is nothing left but to wait.

"Anyway, I must go to shelter and get off of the Net. Bye bye to all good souls of the world."

CARTOONISTS & WRITERS SYNDICATE

LATEST KOSOVO INFORMATION..

.WW3. COM.ING

Keyes's view in Dublin's *Evening Herald* of the Internet as an up-to-date channel of information on the Kosovo conflict

Anger on snowy road to exile



Janine di Giovanni in Rozaje witnesses Balkan history repeating itself as 'ethnic cleansing' creates yet another humanitarian tragedy



I HAVE seen this before, but it does not make the impact less dramatic. A column of people, walking over a snowy mountain path, exhausted, stunned and emotional.

The children, as many as seven crammed into a car, with their frightened faces pressed against the windscreen, waving goodbye. The man trying to ride his bicycle through the path in the snow; the woman still in her bedroom slippers. All of them with their lives in a few plastic carrier bags.

On their faces is etched the same confusion, the same fear, the same uncertainty that I saw during the many refugee crises of the Bosnian war, only this time there is something else. There is anger and resentment as the Nato airstrikes meant to save them have caused even more damage and heartache.

"I have lost everything," said one 61-year-old man who formerly worked as a film editor for the Italian film industry. As he walked alone down the snowy road, he said: "Please, please tell them to leave us alone."

Police in this tiny mountain town on the Kosovo border say that since Saturday some 17,000 people have crossed the border fleeing the wrath of the Serbian militias, which are believed to include Arkan's Tigers and the White Eagles. Both groups played prominent roles in the "ethnic cleansing" of the Bosnian war.

There are no foreigners left in Kosovo, and the testimony of the people coming out is horrific. They tell of the same terror: first of the windows of their houses being broken, then the doors forced open by gunmen who order them to leave immediately. Then the journey over the mountains and the final humiliation: being forced to pay DM100 (£33) per car by Serb border police as they are forced to leave their own country.

These refugees are different from the Bosnians who prayed for airstrikes throughout their gruelling three-year war. These people do not want bombing. They want ground troops to protect them. They say that since the airstrikes started the Serbs have escalated their vicious campaigns against ethnic Albanians, making them pay for Nato's actions.

"Tell the Americans that Pec is burning," said one middle-aged woman who collapsed into her daughter's arms. Pec is the Kosovo city where most of these refugees come from. "Tell them that people are still left there. Tell them to send a ground invasion."

Bujur, a young man who worked as a guard for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, was taking his pregnant wife across the border.

"I don't know where we'll go; I don't know who will let us in," he said.

As a former worker for the OSCE, members of which are allegedly being rounded up and shot by the Serbian militias, he was exceptionally vulnerable.

He spoke of the burning villages, the sound of gunshots and the final moment when he knew that he must take his wife and go. "We left at gunpoint," he said.

What is the most terrifying scenario is that there are no eyes and ears to witness or report the atrocities going on inside Kosovo.

The refugees passing through the Serb checkpoint at Savine Vode who turn and look at their homeland for the last time are the sole witnesses to the horror that is taking place three miles from where I stand.

"One thing here makes me happy," said one local observer, "at least there are a lot of young men coming over."

When I asked her to explain, she said: "It means they're not rounding them up and killing them."

Conflict threatens to wipe Montenegro off the map

By Janine di Giovanni

CAUGHT between an embattled Serbia and the Nato air onslaught, Montenegro is in danger of being swept away, according to its President, an outspoken critic of Slobodan Milosevic.

Milo Djukanovic gave a warning yesterday that Montenegro, the only former Yugoslav republic to remain with Serbia in the rump of Yugoslavia, could be caught up in the present spiral of violence. He said there was "a serious impending danger in which our state could disappear".

Mr Djukanovic, leader of the Democratic Party Socialists, who came to power last year, has been trying to distance his republic economically and politically from Belgrade as fast as possible. But Nato is now pounding military installations in Montenegro, while 30,000 Kosovans have poured across the border seeking refuge.

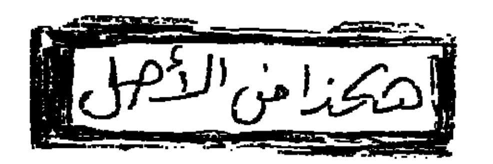
Even during the current crisis he has not softened his criticism of the Serb leader. "It is wrong to concentrate on Milosevic as the only person to discuss the pact of peace on the Balkans," Mr Djukanovic said last night, all but dismissing Mr Milosevic's position.

It is no secret that the 37-year-old President has long harboured ambitions to replace the Serb leader. Even news broadcasts in Montenegro refer to Belgrade as "the so-called Federal Government of Yugoslavia".

On the other side is the Socialist Peoples Party of Momir Bulatovic, the federal Prime Minister in Belgrade and the former Montenegrin President. Although Mr Bulatovic has been marginalised and his party is now run by a relative, he has strong support in the north of Montenegro and he is seen by many here as Mr Milosevic's puppet.

Mr Djukanovic draws his support from the south and from the ethnic Albanians to whom he has made heartfelt promises of democratic reform and decentralisation of government during his presidential campaign. He is seen for the large part as having kept his promise.

There are rumours that Montenegro will be the next Yugoslav republic to break away from Belgrade and descend into war as well as talk of a possible of a coup or a revolution.



Nato chief hints at deal with Milosevic to halt offensive

End to killings is the priority, Javier Solana tells **Charles Bremner** in Brussels

NATO yesterday appeared to shift its priorities in the Balkan crisis, saying that its top objective was to secure a halt to the killings in Kosovo and it doubted whether President Milosevic could be be forced to sign the Rambouillet peace accords.

Javier Solana, the Secretary-General of the alliance, hinted that Nato could suspend its offensive if Mr Milosevic halted his forces and took steps that stopped short of earlier Nato demands. His remarks came as word spread of a ceasefire offer by the Yugoslav President to Yevgeni Primakov, Russia's Prime Minister.

"Our objective is to stop the killing. It is the number one objective at this point. We cannot think of anything else," said Señor Solana. Asked about the allied demand that President Milosevic sign the Rambouillet accord, reached in France last January, he said: "So much has happened in the last few days, I do not know if this is possible or not."

Until yesterday, allied leaders had been insisting that Serbian acceptance of the Rambouillet deal, accepted by the Kosovo Albanians, was a basic condition for halting Nato's action. The deal requires the presence of a Nato peacekeeping force in Kosovo.

"Mr Milosevic must still negotiate and agree to allow the return of the ethnic Albanian population, said Señor Solana. "The return of the refugees must be a condition. We cannot accept a *fait accompli*."

However, his shift in emphasis away from the accord, which allows for an autonomous Kosovo within Serbia, suggested that Nato could be prepared to accept compromise terms from Mr Milosevic. This raised the possibility that Nato could accept the emerging Primakov deal.

Señor Solana denied that the alliance had been taken by surprise by the speed and brutality of the Serbian operation and he said the original goal had not changed. "We never said that we could bomb Milosevic until he came back to the table... getting someone back to the table cannot be achieved militarily," he said.

His remarks also appeared to acknowledge that the Nato operation had not fulfilled an initial hope that it could stun Mr Milosevic into halting his campaign in Kosovo within days.

Speaking for an hour in his office at Nato headquarters, Señor Solana said he was in daily contact with all allied leaders — he had just spoken to Tony Blair — and there was total unity in the 19-member alliance on the Nato operation. He said no plans were being prepared for an allied ground offensive, an operation which would take weeks to organise. He was certain the conflict would be over before Nato's 50th anniversary summit in Washington on April 23.

"It is not going to be resolved in 24 hours," said Señor Solana. "Public opinion has to be prepared for this." He was convinced that Mr Milosevic was being progressively weakened. "He is more and more isolated every day."

Officials said they hoped Mr Primakov would succeed in his Belgrade mission. A welcome side-effect would be to bind Russia closer to the alliance and its strategic objectives in the Balkans. Jamie Shea, Señor Solana's spokesman, said the alliance had been "shocked by the sheer proportions" of Serbia's operation against the Kosovan people. Nato had reports that Serbian forces had used tanks and heavy artillery to attack a column of refugees. It was clear to Nato that Mr Milosevic had a long-arranged "masterplan" to expel the Kosovo population.

Officials said the goal was for Nato aircraft to continue pounding Serbian forces which were committing massacres and driving the Kosovo Albanian population out of the country. Men of military age were being taken away separately and Nato did not know what was happening to them.

Women and children were "in many cases provided with free transport," Mr Shea said. "They are simply bussing people to the frontier to get them out as quickly as possible. You don't improvise a whole bus fleet if you haven't planned this operation a long time in advance."

BENOIT DOPPAGNE / REUTERS



Javier Solana, Nato's leader, above, is confident the conflict will end soon. His spokesman, Jamie Shea, below, spoke of a Milosevic 'masterplan'



Cook: apartheid in Europe unacceptable

KLA says 'we want bombing to go on'

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE Government yesterday launched a counter-offensive against critics of the Nato airstrikes, producing three Albanian spokesmen who insisted that every Kosovo Albanian supported the attacks.

At a press conference Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, presented the three Albanians, including a Kosovo Liberation Army representative, to justify the Nato actions and denounce the "appalling genocide and brutal ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo.

"We've just defeated apartheid in South Africa. We are not going to accept apartheid in Europe," he said. "President Milosevic has gone down the road of ethnic cleansing several times in the last decade. It's time that road was blocked off."

Mr Cook said the refugees were not fleeing the Nato planes; they were fleeing Mr Milosevic's army.

The three Albanians said that they wholeheartedly backed the airstrikes and wanted Nato to redouble its efforts. The situation in Kosovo could "hardly be worse", said Professor Isa Zimbery, head of the Kosovo Information Centre in Britain. But he said the Kosovo people were "fully in accord" with the Nato actions.

Bardhyl Mahmuti, the KLA's representative in Geneva, said those who criticised Nato were supporting fascism in Europe.

Amide Latifi, a former journalist in Kosovo, said all women in the province supported the airstrikes. But she added: "On my phone calls to Kosovo, I smell death."

KOSOVO SUMMARY

US poll backs attacks

Washington: Most Americans approve of the Nato strategy of airstrikes against Serbian targets, the latest poll shows, but opinion is divided on whether any US ground troops should be deployed (Ben Macintyre writes). The poll, by the Pew Research Centre for People and the Press, indicated that 60 per cent supported raids, with 30 per cent opposed, and 50 per cent against a ground force.

Sightseers diverted

Aviano: Italian authorities have closed roads around the US Air Force base here to ease traffic jams caused by curious passersby trying to catch a glimpse of fighter jets taking off. Until April 6, only those with authorisation will be permitted near the base. *(AFP)*

Concerts get kiss of death

Moscow: Anti-American feeling in Russia over Nato airstrikes has prompted Kiss, the veteran US rock group known for their elaborate facial make-up, to cancel three concert dates here this week. The US Embassy advised the group to delay their tour. *(Reuters)*

50 pupils expelled

Nicosia: A Cyprus private school is expelling all its 50 American and British pupils in protest at the Nato bombing. Palace College head Michalis Papachrysostomou said fees would not be refunded. *(AFP)*

Blair seeks to keep public opinion on side

Government steps up its drive to woo the doubters, writes **Philip Webster**

REFUGEES fleeing Kosovo are pleading for Nato to maintain air attacks on the Serbs, Tony Blair said yesterday as the Government intensified efforts to keep public opinion on its side for a long bombing campaign.

The Prime Minister, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and other ministers strengthened their denials that the Nato action had provoked Serb atrocities and argued that the answer to what was happening was to escalate the bombing.

Mr Cook predicted that public opinion would harden as a result of the reported massacres.

Mr Blair, in his most emotional remarks since the bombing began last week, said Nato had to "get in and hit Milosevic and his murderous thugs very, very hard. That is what we intend to do". The Prime Minister emphasised: "There are risks to our forces. And, as I said when this campaign began, there are risks to the Kosovo Albanians.

"But those refugees fleeing their homes are not saying 'Stop the bombing', they are saying 'Stop the Serbs'. They are saying 'Keep up the attacks, don't stop now'. We will not let them down."

Mr Blair, who was visiting a college in north Belfast, said: "The stories being told by refugees as they pour into neighbouring countries are stories of unimaginable suffering and barbarism — of rape, torture, the wholesale destruction of entire communities.

"This is happening on our doorstep, and we simply cannot stand by and let it happen. Do not let anybody tell you that the airstrikes are causing the exodus. It is the programme of ethnic cleansing that is causing the exodus and Nato action is the only way to stop that programme.

"This plan of Milosevic has been in place for a long time. Before any airstrikes took place, he was gathering 40,000 troops and 300 tanks there to carry out this campaign." Mr Blair went on: "Two thousand people had been killed since the summer. Even this time last week, before a single Nato bomb had struck, 250,000 Kosovars — one in 10 of the population — had been made homeless by the Serb repression."

Mr Cook told political correspondents that the atrocities in Kosovo would harden the resolve of the public as well as the Government "to demonstrate that we cannot tolerate this form of barbarity from the middle ages within the Europe of the late twentieth century. Nobody would want us now to walk away from it. I believe public support is there. It will have been as moved as I have been by the information coming out of Kosovo."

He continued to rule out the use of ground troops in present circumstances.

RAF fights press in a time-warp war

The hardware may be new but the metaphors remain the same, writes Richard Owen in Gioia del Colle

As Nato's war against President Milosevic enters its second week, a parallel war looms between the RAF and the British tabloids. The first skirmishes were fought last Sunday, when one tabloid broke ranks and published a story suggesting that "our boys" were "vulnerable to terrorist attacks", a reference to the fact that most of the Harrier aircrews and support staff involved in the bombing raids are staying in hotels and homes in the nearby town.

"If there wasn't a terrorist threat before, there bloody well is now," thundered an angry RAF spokesman as he entered the press room.

There were also tensions when a spokesman told reporters at a briefing in the small hours — after the Harriers had returned safely from their latest mission — that the raid had "run on rails". It emerged the following day that the Harriers had failed to drop their bombs because dense smoke from explosions on the ground had interfered with laser-guided weapons systems.

"When I say it ran on rails," the spokesman explained when challenged, "I meant the planes took off on time and returned safely". The phrase is now banned.

But the biggest tabloid gripe is that "human interest" access to pilots is strictly limited. Not only are reporters forbidden to photograph pilots or give their names, they may not mention ages or other personal details which might help identify them.

Displaying a gift for peace negotiations that even Richard Holbrooke, the American special envoy, might envy, Wing Commander Graham Wright, the detachment commander, has offered a compromise formula, under which the press will be given "as much access as we can manage while observing the common-sense restrictions which apply in wartime".

He has also cannily ordered tea and coffee to be made available to the press, although reporters are denied access to the delights of the mess across the way in case they glean classified information from aircrews tucking into sausages and chips.

One BBC colleague mused: "Why is it that I keep thinking we have picked up where the Second World War left off just over 50 years ago?" as we walked across the Tarmac to watch George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, make his morale-boosting visit to the 280 RAF personnel here. The Harriers are hi-tech marvels. But the buildings at the vast airfield, set in a featureless plain 25 miles inland from the port of Bari, certainly look like the ones you see in wartime documentaries — dark green hangars and hardened shelters, and dilapidated one-storey office buildings and store rooms.

The pilots, drawn from No I (Fighter) Squadron at RAF Wittering, talk of their predecessors who flew Spitfires, Hurricanes and Typhoons out of Tangmere in the same breath as more recent operations over Iraq and Bosnia. When Group Captain Ian Travers Smith, the chief RAF spokesman, was asked this week to describe what it felt like to have a Sam missile "illuminate" your plane just before it locks on and fires at you, he reached for a Second World War metaphor.

It was, he said, "a bit like what happened when Lancaster bombers were caught in an enemy searchlight — they manoeuvered to get out of the beam". There is no question of "scrambling", however. The aircrews spend five hours preparing for the bombing raids before being driven to their Harriers.

In Gioia del Colle is the Villa Duse, an hotel named after the actress Eleanora Duse, mistress of the poet, pilot and adventurer Gabriele D'Annunzio, who flew from here to bomb Austrian positions on the Dalmatian coast in October 1917 — a poignant reminder of an earlier Yugoslav conflict.

Prince visits families

THE Prince of Wales yesterday made a brief morale-boosting visit to wives and familes at RAF Wittering, Cambridgeshire, home base of the Harrier squadron which yesterday flew its first daylight raids over Serbia (Alan Hamilton writes).

The Prince spent just over an hour at the base, talking to relatives who wait anxiously for news of their menfolk in No I Fighter Squadron, who were deployed in a routine changeover to the Nato base at Gioia del Colle in southern Italy in February.

Twelve Harriers from Wittering are involved in the Nato campaign, but flight crew numbers are unknown.

FILIPPO MONTEFORTE / EPA



A British servicewoman examines a bomb fitted to a Harrier GR7 fighter at the Gioia del Colle base in Italy

Time for the politicians to reveal their true aims

BRITAIN has a national interest in the stability of the Balkans and in preventing atrocities in Kosovo. But Tony Blair and other Nato leaders have failed to present a coherent and consistent explanation of either ends or means.

At present, the public in the United States, Britain and, less clearly, France supports military action more strongly than do politicians. Even the deployment of ground troops is backed by a majority in Britain and by a sizeable minority in the US, although neither government says it is planning their use. A widespread "something must be done" mood exists in response to photographs of refugees flooding out of Kosovo and stories of atrocities.

Divisions are greater and more diverse among politicians and commentators. In the Commons, the non-interventionist side ranges from those believing that no action should be taken without United Nations approval (Tony Benn), those worried about relations with Russia (Tam Dalyell), and those who see no national British interest in Kosovo (the Tory Right).

Peter RIDDELL ON POLITICS

On the other side are the ethical interventionists, believing that the West has a duty to stop massacres, ranging from Ken Livingstone and Clare Short to Sir Patrick Cormack, and the Nato solidarity group, generally defence specialists such as Bruce George and Menzies Campbell.

Many Tories sceptical about intervention are also worried about the means, arguing that the Government has been deluding the public, and possibly itself, by refusing to admit that ground troops will, inevitably, have to be deployed. The majority view, both in the Commons and in Cabinet discussions, is that military action has become inevitable because of Mr Milosevic's intransigence.

But this is coupled with misgivings about how the conflict can be ended. Nato leaders have been unclear and ambiguous. We have had grandiloquent, and historically dubious, comparisons by President Clinton between Mr Milosevic and Hitler and the start of the First and Second World Wars. But these parallels do not remotely hold up, as many American commentators have pointed out. Mr Milosevic is a brutal and thuggish dictator, but he has neither the capacity nor the intention to invade western Europe and start a world war.

The threat posed by Mr Milosevic is not global, but that does not make it any less serious. The withdrawal of international monitors and the start of bombing has led to an intensification of the Serb offensive against the Kosovans, but that had already started beforehand. It is no exaggeration to talk about a humanitarian catastrophe. Of course, there have been similar, and worse, such disasters in Africa, but Kosovo is in Europe- and, as Lord Hurd argued yesterday, "this doctrine of the humanitarian duty to intervene is regional, not universal". In the post-Cold War world, the defintion of security no longer means invasion from the east, but also internal aggression. The fighting in Kosovo not only threatens stability in the Balkans, and the possibility of conflict involving Nato countries in the area, but also a flood of refugees into western Europe. That is already a serious problem in Germany. Failure to act now after earlier specific warnings and assurances would undermine the credibility of Nato.

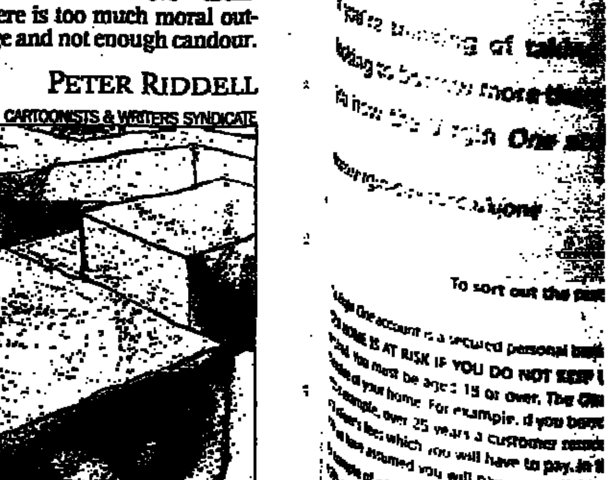
Alliance leaders have been insufficiently frank about these strategic — and therefore British national — interests, and about the means needed to achieve them. There is too much moral outrage and not enough candour.

PETER RIDDELL

CARTOONISTS & WRITERS SYNDICATE



Leahy's view in Brisbane's *Courier Mail* of the Balkans maze confronting Nato troops



Charities plan joint Kosovo relief appeal

Aid agencies treat the conflict like a natural disaster, writes Adrian Lee

BRITISH charities are considering a rare joint appeal to fund a huge relief operation for refugees fleeing Kosovo.

Such a move is unusual for a disaster caused by conflict rather than natural forces, such as earthquake or floods. But it was becoming clear yesterday, as tens of thousands of people continued to pour across the Albanian border, that charities would not be able to cope without a big injection of funds.

The appeal would involve a two-week campaign, including television and radio broadcasts and newspaper advertisements. It would be fronted by two celebrities — in the past Michael Palin, Tom Conti, Nigel Havers and Martin Clunes have backed appeals.

The campaign would also involve setting up telephone lines for credit card pledges, and donations made by cheque would be handled free of charge by banks. The Disasters Emergency Committee represents 15 charities. During the campaign charities are prevented from running their own, individual, appeals.

The Red Cross, which is sending 240 tonnes of food to Albania, was the first to launch its own appeal, beginning a national newspaper advertising campaign. Save the Children said it might follow.

Leading charities last night said a joint appeal, headed by the committee, an umbrella organisation, was likely. An announcement could be made in a few days.

A committee spokesman confirmed that discussions had begun, and a further meeting was planned for today. Save the Children, the Red Cross and Oxfam are all involved in the talks.

British aid workers are already at the forefront of the international operation to help the refugees from Kosovo. Teams with expertise in humanitarian disasters are on their way to the region.

KOSOVO AID OPERATION

www.ifrc.org — Website of the International Red Cross

www.savethechildren.org.uk — Save the Children

www.oneworld.org/oxfam — Oxfam

At the headquarters of the British Red Cross, Mike Goodhand, a former policeman, spent the day negotiating the purchase of 77,000lbs of white beans and other staple supplies which will form about 15,000 food parcels, bound for the region.

Other charities were sending clothes, water and medical kits. The first planeload of government aid, 450 tents and 16,000 blankets, was expected to arrive in Albania last night.

Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, said that the humanitarian crisis in and around Kosovo had "rapidly deteriorated" in the past 48 hours.

Charities involved in the operation appealed for the public to give money, not clothes or food. Mr Goodhand, 41, the Red Cross's head of logistics, who was given the task of buying and delivering 240 tonnes of food to the refugees by Sunday, said he could bulk buy supplies at a third of the cost of British supermarkets.

Yesterday his shopping list also included 33,000lbs of pasta, 66,000lbs of cooking oil and 396,000lbs of flour. Using a network of contacts around the world, the veteran of previous disasters, including Sudan, was able to secure most of the food from a supplier in Greece. From there, it will be transported in 12 articulated lorries to Tirana, broken up into smaller loads and driven 100 miles on treacherous roads to Kukes, on the Kosovan border.


GEOFF PUGH

Paul Roberts, of Children's Aid, supervises at Reading yesterday the loading of emergency relief supplies for Kosovo refugees

At a warehouse in Reading, two lorries organised by Children's Aid were yesterday loaded with clothes and shoes bound for the Albanian border. The charity appealed for financial donations to send more supplies: the cost of each journey is £3,000.

Paul Roberts, the charity's programme manager, returned from Pristina last week, shortly before aid agencies pulled out of Kosovo. "It was very tense," he said. "Most of the aid is going to the Albanian population in an area which the Serb community considers is theirs. As a result aid workers were suffering direct intimidation. Our members had stones thrown at their vehicles and were beaten."

Mr Roberts will return to the region in the next few days. Unable to return to Kosovo, he will be based in Macedonia.

Cafod, the Catholic aid agency, said yesterday that it was extending a project which offers psychological help for refugees who have been traumatised by their experiences in Kosovo.

Save the Children placed five extra workers on standby to fly to Macedonia and Albania. Supplies of cooking utensils, clothes and rehydration kits are on their way to the region. Oxfam said it would send seven extra workers, as well as water, clothes, tents and sanitation supplies.

British airlift begins as the West hastens to assist devastated region

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

A BRITISH transport aircraft loaded with tents and blankets left yesterday for Albania as Western governments and international relief agencies began a massive effort to rush supplies to the thousands of destitute refugees pouring out of Kosovo.

The Russian-built Ilyushin 76 aircraft, chartered by the Department for International Development, flew from Kent International Airport in Manston to Ancona, Italy, and at first light today will go on to Tirana. Nato would not allow it to fly there yesterday after dark. Loaded with 450 six-person tents and 16,000 blankets, it was the first of several aircraft planned to take British aid to the area over the next week.

It flew in as donor countries, the International Red Cross and United Nations agencies met in Geneva to co-ordinate the huge effort to feed and shelter the refugees.

Tomorrow UN relief officials will draw up a new international appeal for money, as the $64 million (£39 million) raised so far is rapidly running out. Next week there will be a full diplomatic summit to assess the reception centres in Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro and to decide what should be done with the refugees.

Britain yesterday took a tough stance on opening the way for refugees coming to the UK. Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said that their long-term future must be to return to their homeland. Accepting them into Britain would be to help President Milosevic in his "ethnic cleansing", he said.

Germany, which is co-ordinating the European Union response, is reluctant to accept large numbers of Kosovo Albanians. It has already taken by far the largest numbers of Bosnian refugees, many of whom are still in Germany.

Greece, however, wants the Albanians quickly dispersed, fearing that a large concentration in Macedonia will destabilise the country. Greece says it will accept its share of refugees if others do so also, but is already bracing itself for a large influx of desperate Kosovans making their way to the Greek border.

Turkey announced that some 4,000 Kosovans had arrived in the past week, adding to at least 3,000 already there. Many are of Turkish origin, and Turkey estimates that a further 70,000 ethnic Turks live in Kosovo. Turkey's Red Crescent organisation has sent seven lorryloads of food, tents and blankets to Macedonia and Albania.

Egypt promised aid and much of the Arab world is also expected to pay for relief for fellow Muslims.

The EU yesterday released $10.7 million for emergency aid and Washington announced a grant of $8.5 million to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

☐ Gioia del Colle: An Italian Navy ship unloaded tents and buses at the Albanian port of Durres yesterday in an effort to prevent an illegal influx of refugees into Italy (John Phillips writes). Other equipment and teams of doctors were being flown to Albania in the air and sea lift, Operation Rainbow.

White mother hands over her black baby

Test-tube mix-up leaves two sets of parents with a son in common, reports **Damian Whitworth**

A WHITE mother of test-tube twins, who gave birth to one white boy and one black after a mix-up at a fertility clinic, has decided to hand the black child to its biological parents.

After years of trying for a baby, Donna Fasano went to a New York clinic where she was implanted with four eggs fertilised by her husband, Richard. But doctors also implanted by accident several eggs belonging to Deborah and Robert Rogers, who had been at the clinic on the same day and are black.

The mistake emerged when tests on the foetuses revealed that Mrs Fasano was not the biological mother of both. She then gave birth to one white child and one black and Mrs Rogers, who had failed to conceive after treatment at Lillian Nash's clinic, sued Dr Nash.

She and her husband also filed a lawsuit seeking custody of the black boy. But with the boys now three months old, the Fasanos decided this week to give Mr and Mrs Rogers the infant they were fighting for and are planning their own negligence action.

"We both want what's in the best interest of the child. We're giving him up because we love him," said Mrs Fasano in a statement that attacked the doctors who implanted the eggs. "This wasn't my doing. People with infertility problems should be able to go to their doctors and trust them to do the right thing. To them, it may be a job; to me, it's my life. She [Dr Nash] may have given me two beautiful babies, but she destroyed their lives."

Ivan Tantleff, a lawyer for the Fasanos, said they were devastated. "The Fasanos have reared, loved and cared for both children as their own. She is doing this because she loves her boys, and she is a victim here, not the culprit. She doesn't look at them as white and black. She looks at them as her sons. She is torn apart."

Mrs Rogers, from New Jersey, who had paid $1,500 (£950) for the treatment, was said by her lawyer, Rudolph Silas, to have been distraught and seeking counselling, but was delighted when told of the decision by the Fasanos: "She was very excited to hear the good news and overwhelmed after so many failed efforts to conceive. Delighted, overwhelmed and mostly in tears."

Mr Silas added: "She had approached this at the end of many years trying to conceive. It certainly raises the possibility of a happy ending for all parties. At least happier than it would have been if there had not been two children."

The couples are expected to meet within days and a deal will be worked out that will include visitation rights to allow the two boys, whose names and pictures have not been released, to grow up as brothers.

Dr Nash, 71, declined to comment on the resolution of the case but previously expressed her dismay about the mix-up. "We've tried to do the right thing all along. I've never had anything happen like this before.

"I told both couples about it as soon as I found out."

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



The Queen Mother with Alex Michael, rider of Carlisle Bandito's, winner of the Royal Artillery Gold Cup at Sandown

Tough guy test with a crucifix is criticised

By Ruth Gledhill
Religion Correspondent

A "TOUGH guy" millennium endurance test in which contestants will have to carry wooden crosses to commemorate the Crucifixion has been condemned as tasteless by the Church of England.

More than 2,000 competitors have already entered next year's competition, to be held near Wolverhampton. Billy Wilson, the organiser, said that Jewish and Muslim competitors would be allowed to carry a tree instead of a cross.

Mr Wilson, a Roman Catholic, added: "We were going to make them all carry a cross but we respect all our competitors. Jesus was the original 'tough guy'."

The Rev Robert Ellis, spokesman for the Lichfield diocese, said: "To paraphrase the late Kenny Everett, this has to be in the worst possible taste."

Target for seeing patients revised

By Ian Murray
Medical Correspondent

THE Government set ambitious targets for outpatient clinics yesterday after meeting its pledge on cutting hospital waiting lists two months ahead of schedule.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, aims to reduce the number queuing for a first appointment to see a specialist since this "waiting list to join the waiting list" has grown to 220,000 and is in turn becoming an embarrassment.

He has promised that more than a third of a million more new outpatients will be seen next year over and above the record 11 million who will be seen this year.

Doctors' leaders immediately told him that was a promise too far. "The continual rise in work load is unsustainable," Peter Hawker, chairman of the British Medical Association's consultants' committee, said. The new promise could be delivered only if there was an immediate expansion in consultant numbers, he said.

The inpatient figures for February showed the list was cut by 39,700 from January, to 1,119,700, the lowest since December 1996.

www.doh.gov.uk/public/racpub.htm#mar99 Waiting list link
www.doh.gov.uk/complain.htm Site for complaints to NHS

Anti-drugs chief backs 'medicinal' cannabis

By Richard Ford
Home Correspondent

THE medical use of cannabis won the backing of the Government's chief anti-drugs campaigner yesterday.

Keith Hellawell, a former chief police constable, said that doctors should be allowed to prescribe the class B drug to ease pain and suffering, provided the beneficial effects were proved by research.

"There appear to be many qualities within the herb that are likely to have an impact on different suffering," he told the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee.

Mr Hellawell, UK Anti-Drugs Co-ordinator, recently visited a farm where cannabis is being grown for medical research under a special licence issued by the Home Office. Five thousand plants have been sown in a secure glasshouse in southern England.

The Government allowed the trial because of increasing evidence that cannabis could be useful as a painkiller and in treating illnesses such as multiple sclerosis and epilepsy.

Mr Hellawell also told the MPs that the popularity of cannabis was declining among 15 to 25 year olds because of its widespread use, and that smoking heroin was frequently the first-choice of drug for young people. "They think they are not being rebellious or radical if they are taking cannabis," he said.

Writers protest at library closures

By Dalya Alberge, Arts Correspondent

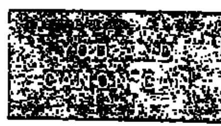
THE writers Alan Bennett, Martin Amis and Ben Elton, the actress Sadie Frost and the comedian Harry Enfield are among celebrities challenging the closure of libraries in a North London borough.

In what could be a test case — alerting councils across the country to pause before closing libraries — legal action is being taken to stop Camden council shutting five libraries over the next four years.

The campaigners argue that under Section 7 of the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act, a local authority has a statutory duty to provide efficient and comprehensive library services.

Tom Selwyn, for the group, said the campaigners would present a formal complaint to Chris Smith, the Culture Minister, tomorrow. "We think there are grounds for the Secretary of State to look at what Camden has decided to do."

Camden has earmarked three libraries to close this year, with large ones at Holborn and St Pancras closing within the next four years.



Chorus amplifies Longford's song from the heart



God willing, the Earl of Longford turns 94 this year. With his frail body, leathery, elongated face and gravity-defying tuft of hair, he crackles with energy like a mad scientist recently subjected to an electric shock. The spring in his step comes from the incongruous training shoes for which he is famous, for he is now quite lame; but mentally the springiness remains, though you never quite know which way his lordship will bounce.

So this old bird's final song *may not* be sung for years yet. But still there was a poignancy both for him and for the last Lords chamber of its kind, in a little poem he quoted during yesterday's debate on Lords reform. It was addressed, he said, to a blackbird whose hours were numbered.

If this be the last song that you shall sing,
Sing well, for you may not sing another:
Sing, brother, sing.

Longford's song would be missed. He muses rather than speaks — but a muser aware he has an audience. Like an eccentric and celebrated professor with a packed lecture theatre, he raises to the status of performance art the stream-of-consciousness ramble.

And he has a habit, a little verbal tic. The earl finishes many sentences by repeating the last words: a sort of echo, melancholy, thoughtful.

The previous speaker, Lord Pearson of Rannoch, had called himself a maverick Conservative. Mused Longford: "I don't know how many maverick Conservatives there are about today but I was one 70 years ago, 70 years ago.

"*My mind* goes back ..." His mind kept going back. It seemed something of a gamble each time how far back his mind would go — like throwing a stick for a dog to retrieve, and seeing where it lands. "My mind goes back 50 years when I heard Lord Cranborne's grandfather, grandfather ..."

Next, Lord Longford's mind went back some 40 years, when Lord Addison, Leader of the Lords for six years after the last war, tugged the jacket of young Pakenham (as he then was) in mid-oration, and hissed from behind: "Sit down now; you've got the House with you. You'll lose it if you go on any longer."

"My mind goes back 30 years, to when I was Leader of this place, this place." The earl spoke of the charms of the Upper Chamber and its miscellaneous team. Lord Cranborne's grandfather, Lord Salisbury, said this was primarily a House of Parliament, not a club. But it was a club too, club too. And what a club! "This has been a useful place and all of us have come to love it, love it."

Longford was regretful rather than defiant. "Are we going to throw all that away, to disappear without trace, without trace?" There was, he realised, "the possibility of the deal, the deal," but he accepted that something had to give. "The time may come when this performance will have to come about, come about." And if it did — well his lordship would bow to the inevitable.

His mind went back. Sensing he had the House with him, which he did, Lord Longford decided to heed the memory of Lord Addison, all those years ago, *and sit down* before he lost it. As Addison's shade tugged at his jacket, brother blackbird's parting note echoed its way into *Hansard*: if the hereditaries were to go, "I hope it will be done in a humane way ...

"... humane way."

Lord Longford sat down to study his notes, hunched, with a magnifying glass as big as a saucer.

Alleged terrorists win human rights battle

Landmark ruling paves way for host of legal challenges under new Act, writes **Frances Gibb**

FOUR alleged terrorists won a landmark ruling yesterday that paves the way for a host of legal challenges under the Human Rights Act 1998.

It is the first ruling to let defendants invoke the Act, which enshrines the European Human Rights Convention into British law, even before it comes into force next year.

The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham of Cornhill, and two other judges ruled that the prosecution of the four men violated their right to a fair trial. The ruling, if upheld in the House of Lords, also renders useless provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1989 aimed at stopping Britain from being used as a base for foreign terrorists.

The four Algerians were arrested in 1997. Three of them, Sofiane Kebilene, Farid Boukemiche and Sofiane Souidi, are accused of "having in their possession chemical containers, radio equipment, manuals, documents, credit cards and sums of money in circumstances which give rise to a reasonable suspicion that the articles were in their possession for a purpose connected with the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism".

A similar charge against Mr Rechachi relates to "documents, cards, computer discs, money and books". The provisions at the centre of the case effectively reverse the normal burden of proof by requiring a defendant to establish that they had suspect items for an innocent purpose.

Lord Bingham said that the section undermined "in a blatant and obvious way" the right of a defendant to be presumed innocent until proved guilty, which was a violation of everyone's right to a fair trial under the European Convention of Human Rights.

He could "conceive of no circumstances" in which, if the court concluded the trial was unfair, it would not go on to find a violation of the European convention.

Already one case in the Court of Appeal was awaiting yesterday's ruling. Two Palestinians convicted of the 1994 car bomb attack on the Israeli Embassy are challenging non-disclosure of documents under the Human Rights Act.

Other challenges are likely to follow across the whole investigative process, such as granting bail, police interview techniques, police surveillance and sentencing provisions. There could also be challenges to decisions by public authorities — such as planning decisions — where appeals are likely to take place after the Act is in force.

Lord Bingham, sitting with


Bingham: prosecution violated right to fair trial

Lord Justice Laws and Mr Justice Sullivan, ruled yesterday that the Director of Public Prosecutions acted unlawfully in pressing ahead with charges of possessing items for the purpose of committing terrorism abroad.

The DPP would probably expect the Act to be brought into force within a couple of years, the judges said. He could assume that the trial could result in convictions and their convictions "would in all probability be quashed, at some not inconsiderable cost to the public purse and no obvious advantage to the public weal".

The DPP was granted leave to appeal to the House of Lords.

David Pannick, QC, for the DPP, had argued there was no inconsistency between Section 16 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the "fair trial" provisions of Article 6 (2) of the European Convention. In any case, he argued, the Convention would not become part of English law until next year, when the Human Rights Act 1998 took effect, and it was the DPP's duty to apply the law as it now stood.

Gareth Peirce, the solicitor for the men, who remain on bail, said: "This is important not just for the case itself, but in saying that however draconian the intent of Parliament, it cannot override inalienable rights."

John Wadham, director of Liberty, the civil rights group, said: "This case illustrates the importance that the Human Rights Act will have when it comes into force because for the first time it will give us positive rights and prevent the Government using legislation that violates those rights.

"I hope now the Government will implement the Act fairly quickly rather than leave us in this legal limbo."

Anne Owers, director of Justice, said that the ruling showed how vulnerable this kind of legislation was to challenges under the Human Rights Act.

"Already the Act is living and breathing within the UK judicial system and there is now a very powerful argument for the Act being implemented in full as soon as practicable."

Senior police officers are concerned that the human rights legislation will prove to be a potent weapon against investigations.

Law Report, page 40


The Fat Controller in top hat and tails takes charge of the railway in the *Thomas the Tank Engine* series

'Fat Controller' for royal branch line

By Adam Sherwin

JOHN PRESCOTT is to become the Fat Controller to the Royal Train under a new agreement which will save it from the scrapyard.

Like Sir Topham Hatt of the Rev W. Awdry's *Thomas the Tank Engine's* stories, he will be in charge of a rather special branch line.

The deal has come about because the Royal Train is to be hired out to Tony Blair and his ministers for departmental "awaydays" in a costcutting deal agreed between Buckingham Palace and the Government. Mr Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Secretary, will have the final say on other users of the train, which has annual running costs of £1.5 million.

Charities and commercial organisations will also be invited to apply to hire the train, which the Palace acknowledges is underused, for events that are deemed to be "in the national interest". Requests from non-governmental organisations will be subject to the approval of Mr Prescott.

A palace spokesman said: "This is an opportunity to recoup the costs of running the train which is underused. Government departments can apply to hire the train for uses which are in the national interest."

The train, which was used on 19 occasions in the last financial year despite


Prescott: takes charge of leasing the Royal Train to other users

the Palace budgeting for 32 trips, has been leased on one previous occasion. Cherie Blair took the wives of the leaders of the G8 countries from Birmingham to Chequers during last year's summit.

Downing Street said it had no immediate plans to use the train but government sources indicated that the Prime Minister may use the eight-carriage train for joint visits with the Queen, meetings with heads of state and visits to Scotland or Wales. Further possibilities include taking the train to mainland Europe, through the Channel Tunnel.

The Conservatives warned Mr Blair to use the train for official functions only. Peter Ainsworth, Shadow Culture spokesman, said: "It would be quite inappropriate for the Royal Train to be used for party political purposes. I hope that this is not further evidence of Mr Blair's presidential tendencies."

Palace officials had come under pressure to scrap the Royal Train during negotiations between Government and the Royal Household over this year's annual travel budget, which was settled at £19.5 million. The real cost of running the train has been estimated to be as high as £7 million.

The average journey costs £67,000 and the train is mainly used by the Queen and the Prince of Wales for lengthy overnight journeys to the North of England and Scotland.

The Palace agreed to cut the number of carriages from 14 to eight and is determined to get the annual budget under £1 million.

The Queen is said to have recognised that the train can appear to be an extravagance to the public and encourages members of the Royal family to travel first-class on scheduled services whenever possible.

Irvine's warning to peers over Bill

By James Landale
Political Correspondent

HEREDITARY peers were told yesterday that any attempt to delay the Bill expelling them from the Lords would kill a deal aimed at easing the passage of the legislation. Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, said that the so-called Weatherill amendment temporarily saving 91 hereditary peers from expulsion would allow the rest to depart "with dignity, not querulously and without rancour".

But he gave notice that the Government would reject the deal if peers attempted to delay the House of Lords Bill, which came up for the second day of its second reading debate last night. He said the Government would consider the agreement breached if peers backed amendments delaying its implementation, made its operation temporary, or made it subject to a referendum. It would also be breached if peers forced "any material disruption" to the legislative programme.

The Government would if necessary invoke the Parliament Acts, he added.

Lord Cranborne, the former Tory Lords Leader who was sacked for secretly agreeing the Weatherill amendment with the Government, said the Lord Chancellor's attempt to "bushwhack" the House into accepting the deal "has not



No jokes please, we're trying to enjoy the cruise

By Robin Young

YOU wonder what happened to stand-up comedians and end-of-pier shows? Well, they went to sea on cruise ships, and now they are being scuttled.

Thomson Travel Group announced yesterday that it is dropping no fewer than 76 British comedy acts, casting them adrift from its 1999 summer cruise programme, because, the company says, a survey showed that holidaymakers put comics bottom of their list of entertainment preferences.

The oldest cruise joke of all, for those who need to be reminded, goes: "My wife's on a cruise to the West Indies." "Jamaica?" "No, she went of her own accord." It started life as soon as P&O invented the concept of cruising. Nowadays, as audiences might expect, cruise jokes are closer to the bone.

The comedians who find themselves so unceremoniously unshipped for questionable quipping are indignant at the treatment they have received.

Yesterday one, who declined to be named in case he never worked again, said: "Some of the biggest names in nightclub comedy have been axed. I am astounded. I can't believe they are using a questionnaire to judge comedians. It just doesn't work like that.

"This is just a get-out. They have been putting on young alternative comics, which the older age groups just don't find funny.

"Last year I had a fantastic season — the audience loved me. I got standing ovations. When people go on holiday they want to be made to laugh. I am sure when people who go back to cruises year after year realise there are no comedians on the bill, they will complain."

Thomson Cruises said yesterday: "This isn't meant to be funny. We constantly monitor the customers' reactions and suggestions about entertainment. As a result of very recent monitoring, we have shifted the balance in terms of comics and comedians. The customers prefer musical shows."

Tour operators such as Thomson are accustomed to accusations that they have vulgarised one of the oldest and stateliest of diversions for the wealthy, popularising cruises by pumping up the numbers and bringing down the prices.

Yesterday it was its upmarket rival, P&O, which boasted that it would be floating no fewer then three cruises entirely devoted to comedy, hosted by Mike Craig and starring such names as Paul Daniels, Kathy Staff from *Last of the Summer Wine*, and Phil Cool. "Every cruise will have a comedian aboard," P&O pledged. "Comics are a much-loved part of shipboard cabaret. It would be madness to push them overboard."

Yet Thomson is adamant. "We feel we should react quickly to customers' requests," a spokesman said. "They spend a lot of money on their holidays and we want to make them happy. But out of 1,500 nights of entertainment, we are only talking about 76 acts, which is a very small percentage. We are very sorry that part of the entertainment crew will not be joining us, and we will do our best to find them jobs elsewhere in the Thomson range, for example in hotels."

Hotel guests, you have been warned.

CARRY ON CRUISING

Some shipboard comics' jokes:

☐ I won't say the audience on the last cruise were old, but they held the captain's farewell party on the first night, just in case.

☐ I've got the smallest cabin. It's so far below they call it the Jacques Cousteau suite. It's so small that, when I turn the key in the lock, I break the window.

☐ As for the commodore, I've known him since he was just a little comma.

☐ I tell you, if it wasn't for the Valium on this cruise, I'd be on drugs. I did go to see the ship's doctor anyway. He said: "You're crazy." "Crazy?", I said. "I want a second opinion." "OK," he said. "You're ugly too."



ROY RILEY

Eric Morecambe's widow, Joan, left, with Doreen Wise at the funeral in Slough yesterday of Mrs Wise's husband, Ernie

Laughter to the end for Ernie Wise

By Joanna Bale

LAUGHTER and tears were the order of service as showbusiness friends, family and fans said farewell to Ernie Wise at his funeral yesterday. Michael Grade, who gave the tribute at Slough Crematorium, echoed Eric Morecambe's favourite characterisation of Wise, who died ten days ago aged 73, when he said: "Nobody who did not enjoy the privilege of working closely with Morecambe and Wise can possibly understand the importance of the one to the other. Wise without Morecambe, Morecambe without Wise? Unthinkable, like trying to create a table without legs, short, fat and hairy or not." Among the mourners were the comedians' widows, Angela Rippon, Frank Bough, Frankie Vaughan, Rolf Harris and Tom O'Connor.

Paris store offers virtual shopping on rollerskates

From Susan Bell in Paris

ROLLERSKATING assistants will soon be helping shoppers around the world to browse through the latest fashions in a Paris department store using an interactive website.

The futuristic uniforms of the cyber-salesforce are a far cry from the black suit, pearls and haughty expression traditionally worn by Paris shop assistants. Dubbed *webcamers*, the skating sales assistants are being introduced by Printemps to allow customers sitting at their computer screens to see and select from the store's stock of one and a half million items.

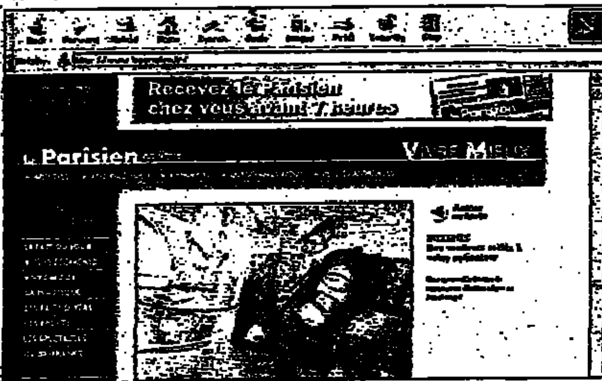
The *webcamers* are equipped with mobile telephones and mini-cameras strapped to their wrists. These will be linked to the Internet when the service is launched next week. In their free hands, the assistants carry a portable computer so that they can communicate directly with the client.

A customer looking for the latest Dior accessory will be able to log on to the Printemps website and request the services of a *webcamer*. The assistant will skate over to the appropriate department, allowing the customer to see the store's entire range of handbags live on screen while "talking" to him or her by typing messages on the computer. The *webcamer* will be able to offer advice while guiding the customer around the shop. The customer can then select and pay for the item over the Internet.

The interactive concept, which allows the customer to take a virtual stroll through the shop without leaving home, should prove a big improvement on the popular practice of mail order shopping over the Internet.

Four *webcamers* will opertate in the store at first, but Printemps said that, if the programme proved a success, it would recruit more rollerskating assistants. In the meantime, *cybernocturnes* will also be available to allow customers to do a spot of virtual shopping on evenings when the store is closed.

☐ Website: *www.printemps.fr*



Ready for shopping action: a *webcamer* at Printemps

Frailty drove friend of Prince to suicide

By Helen Johnstone

A FORMER joint master of the Quorn hunt, whose friends included the Prince of the Wales, killed herself after failing health meant that she lost her independence.

An inquest yesterday was told that Ulrica Murray Smith, 87, was found with a plastic bag tied over her head by a carer at her home in Gaddesby, Leicestershire. She had died of suffocation.

Marguerite Leigh-Bolter, a friend, told the inquest in Loughborough that the former showjumper was fiercely independent. She had become depressed after realising that she was too frail to take her annual cruise. "She wanted to die because she didn't want to be a burden to her family or the carers," Mrs Leigh-Bolter said.

Mrs Murray Smith was the granddaughter of Lady Ulrica Seymour, the daughter of the 12th Duke of Somerset. The Prince wrote the foreword to her book, *The Magic of the Quorn*, published in 1980.

Verdict: suicide.

Ulster peace deal 'on a knife edge'

Unionists deny reports of a deal on disarmament, write Martin Fletcher and Audrey Magee

TONY BLAIR and Northern Ireland's political leaders were locked in talks to save the Good Friday peace accord last night. Officials said the outcome rested "on a knife edge".

The Prime Minister's spokesman said it was premature to talk of either breakthrough or failure, but acknowledged that time was running out. Mr Blair was prepared to stay overnight, but had to be back in the House of Commons for Prime Minister's Questions this afternoon.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, is threatening to force the issue to a head by triggering the mechanism for establishing the executive, but there were doubts about whether she would dare to take a step that could prompt David Trimble's resignation as First Minister.

The Ulster Unionist Party emphatically denied reports of an emerging deal under which Mr Trimble would agree to form an executive containing Sinn Fein provided he had cast-iron guarantees that the IRA would begin disarming shortly afterwards.

"There is no question of the UUP agreeing to an executive involving Sinn Fein until there is some prior decommissioning," John Taylor, the UUP's deputy leader, said. Another UUP official said: "We would be torn apart by the dissenters if we don't get decommissioning."

It was equally unclear what would happen in the absence of a deal. Mr Trimble could seek a government review of the accord, arguing that the republicans had violated it by refusing to disarm. Dr Mowlam might follow through on her threat to trigger the mechanism. Whatever happened, the scope for compromise would be greatly reduced by the start of the marching season on Easter Monday and the approaching European elections.

Mr Blair began the day by saying that a breakthrough was possible only if the Province's leaders showed "extraordinary courage and vision and leadership". Mr Trimble risks being toppled by his party if he establishes an executive without prior disarmament, and Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein's president, insists he cannot deliver IRA decommissioning.

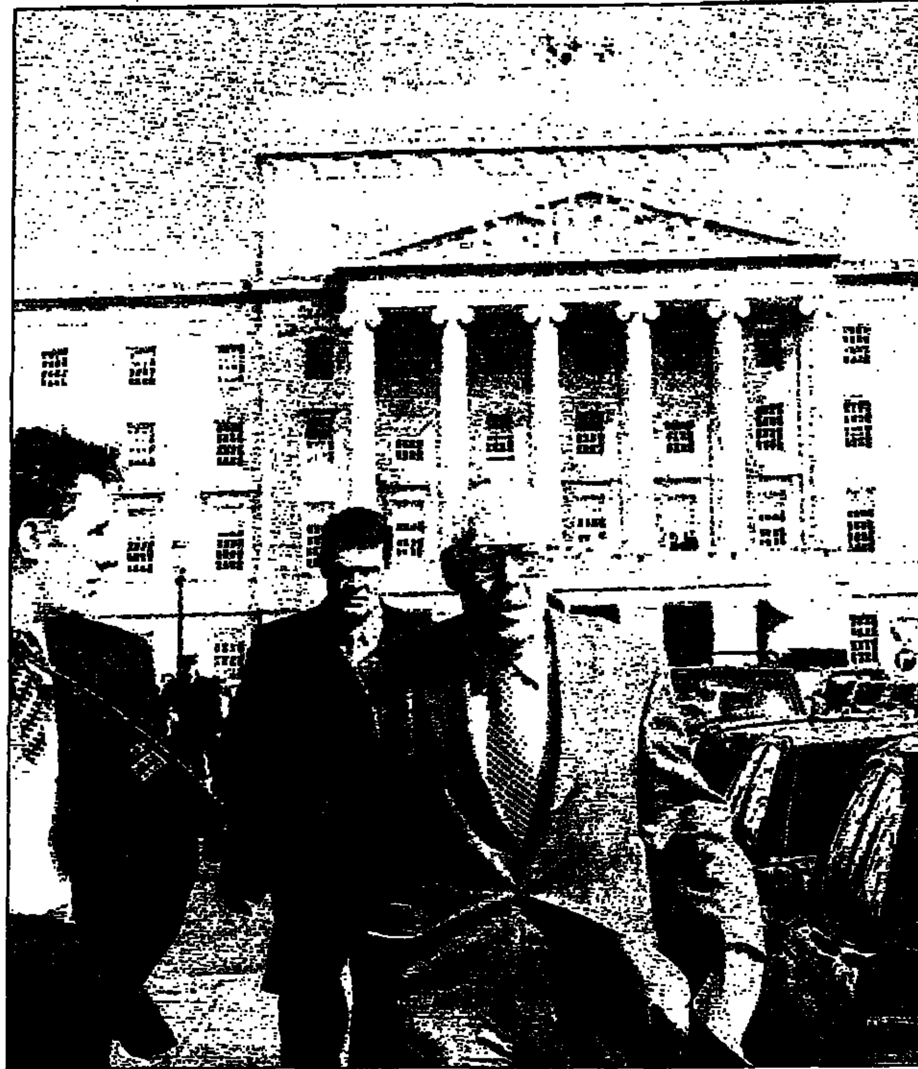
Mr Blair and Bertie Ahern, the Irish Prime Minister, met the smaller parties at Stormont in the morning, and the main players, including the UUP, Sinn Fein, the Social Democratic and Labour Party and General John de Chastelain, head of the international disarmament body, at Hillsborough Castle in the afternoon and evening. General de Chastelain would play a key role in verifying any decommissioning.

The two Prime Ministers also met the Orange Order and leaders of Portadown's nationalist Garvaghy Road residents, suggesting that they were also looking for a deal that would resolve the dispute over the Orangemen's annual Drumcree parade.

The Province's Roman Catholic bishops urged their followers to pray for success, saying the alternative was unthinkable, but the atmosphere was not helped by a loyalist bomb thrown at a Sinn Fein councillor's house in Co Antrim.

Mr Blair was heckled by an anti-accord Unionist assemblyman, and a group called Families Acting for Innocent Relatives, who accused him of appeasing terrorists and ignoring their victims. Two Sinn Fein protesters enraged Ian Paisley and his Democratic Unionist Party by flying an Irish tricolour from the statue of Lord Carson, the father of Unionism, at Stormont.

ALAN LEWIS



Ian Paisley quits Stormont, left, in protest at republicans who climbed on Lord Carson's statue, and were later driven away by police, bottom right

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hospital malaria kills man

A man aged 22 who went into Nottingham City Hospital with a chest infection died after contracting malaria during his stay. Two other patients in the same ward were also infected. Health authorities said the three patients may have been infected by contaminated blood.

Gavin Sebborn, from New Basford, Nottingham, died after contracting cerebral malaria. A spokesman for the hospital said that the two other infected patients, a 91-year-old woman and a middle-aged man, were responding well to treatment. An urgent investigation has been opened into the outbreak. An inquest on Mr Sebborn was opened and adjourned yesterday.

Resign call

Alice Mahon, Labour MP for Halifax, tabled a motion demanding that Chris Woodhead, Chief Inspector of Schools, resign. She said she was convinced he had not told the truth over claims that he once had an affair with a sixth-former.

Drug verdict

A coroner recorded a verdict of "dependence on drugs" at the inquest into the death of the Marquess of Bristol. Bill Walrond said at Bury St Edmunds that Lord Bristol was "as deserving of sympathy as of censure".

Ecstasy ruling

The nephew of the architect Lord Rogers of Riverside was jailed for two years for possessing Ecstasy with intent to supply. Aylesbury Crown Court was told that Mark Rogers, 25, had 194 tablets hidden in his underwear.

Sacking cash

Staff who are unfairly dismissed for blowing the whistle on illegal practices or over health and safety issues will be entitled to unlimited compensation, Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, announced.

Smoky spice

The former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell has been criticised after being pictured with a cigarette during a break from filming. The anti-smoking group ASH said: "It can undo all the good that health education messages can do."

Teachers threaten to block pay plan

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

A MODERATE teaching union threatened industrial action yesterday to derail the Government's plans for performance-related pay, despite a plea from David Blunkett to work with him on the scheme.

The Education and Employment Secretary rejected a demand from the Association of Teachers and Lecturers to delay implementation of the £1 billion package of reforms next year. He said the Treasury had already allocated the money, and teachers would miss out if it did not go ahead.

Mr Blunkett told the association's annual conference in Harrogate that the principle of performance-related pay was not negotiable, but he promised discussion on its delivery. "We are trying to do something that we haven't done in the teaching profession before, but which is taken for granted elsewhere: that you are rewarded for good performance."

However, the first of three attempts during the Easter holiday to win over teaching unions brought a rebuff for Mr Blunkett. In a rare show of militancy, delegates voted almost unanimously to support a motion giving the executive the power to call a ballot on industrial action.

Peter Smith, the association's general secretary, said action could centre on a boycott of the annual appraisal that the Government has suggested as the basis for bonus payments to exceptional teachers. "That would be a pity because there are other elements of the Government's proposals for which there could be a consensus," he said.

LINKS

atl.org.uk./assembly/assembly.html Conference website, details of motions and debates

Male myths are women's main sporting hurdle

By Ian Murray
Medical Correspondent

LINFORD CHRISTIE and Florence Griffith-Joyner could have been side by side in the Olympic starting blocks if women had not been brainwashed by 19th-century medical myths, a new study says.

Hormone research this century is also blamed for making women believe that they are frail and physically inferior to men. Despite great advances, they will never compete on a level playing field in most sports because of the prejudice, the report claims.

"If we could turn the clock back 120 years and these myths did not exist, then men and women today would be competing at comparable levels," says the author of the study, Ellis Cashmore, Professor of Humanities and Social Sciences at Staffordshire University.

For proof of women's potential, he points to the fact that their world record for the marathon has improved by an average of 2 minutes 47 seconds a year since 1964, when the record for women was first officially kept. Men have improved their record time by an average of 66 seconds a year.

"For the sake of television, women are started in marathons half an hour before the men, so they still do not compete side by side," he says. "If they were allowed to do so, then I estimate that, by about 2020, women would be finishing in the same sort of time as the men."

Tennis champions such as Martina Hingis are as good as John Newcombe and Stan Smith at their prime, he says. But mixed doubles do not create the competition required to make women achieve the level of men, because "it is a jocular kind of event that lacks the bitterness necessary for maximum performance". Professor Cashmore says that women have proved they are the equal of men in equestrianism, where they compete alongside one another, but it was probably assumed that this was because the physical exertion was by the horse, not the rider.

Writing in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, he says that male anatomists in the 19th-century sought to prove female inferiority by drawing attention to differences between the organs, functions and feelings of the sexes. In the 1920s and 1930s, endocrinology created a new understanding of sexual differences based on hormones.

"So perfectly did these myths suit more general beliefs about women, their position in the sexual division of labour and their domestic duties, that they were eagerly accepted as fact by a British society encrusted in patriarchy.

"Women's progress in sport has been retarded not by their own physiological frailty or bodily differences, but by myths about their physical capabilities," he writes.

In the past, women were warned against sport and exercise. Some opponents suggested that the enfeebling effects of menstruation could be offset by deep breathing and mild exercise, like throwing bean bags. Others prescribed rest.

"While these may sound like old wives' tales, they had the status of scientific fact in the period when organised sports were coming into being. Sports were intended for men only," he says.

Women feared that exercise would make them incapable of having children, grow facial hair or lose their breasts. Sportswomen were regarded as odd and believed to lack femininity or to represent moral degeneracy.

"Against this background, the question is not why women lag so far behind men, but how they have managed to make up so much ground so quickly," Professor Cashmore writes.

Alyson Rudd, page 20

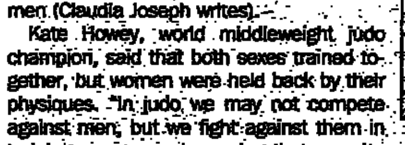
MARATHON TIMES

	Women	Men
1908	-	2:55:18
1909	-	2:40:34
1913	-	2:36:06
1920	-	2:32:35
1925	-	2:29:01
1926	3:40:22	-
1935	-	2:26:42
1952	-	2:20:42
1954	-	2:17:39
1963	3:37:07	2:14:28
1964	3:19:33	2:12:11
1965	-	2:12:00
1967	3:15:22	2:09:36
1969	-	2:08:33
1970	3:02:53	-
1971	-	2:49:40
1974	-	2:43:54
1975	-	2:38:19
1979	-	2:27:32
1981	-	2:08:18
1983	2:22:43	-
1984	-	2:08:05
1985	2:21:06	2:07:12
1988	-	2:06:50
1998	2:20:47	2:06:05

THE EVIDENCE LOOKS WEAK

British sportswomen were critical of Professor Cashmore's research that suggested women could compete on level pegging with men (Claudia Joseph writes).

Kate Howey, world middleweight judo champion, said that both sexes trained together, but women were held back by their physiques. "In judo we may not compete against men, but we fight against them in training, so we are improving that way. It would be possible to compete against them, but the men would win because they have a lot more strength than women."



Rachel Heyhoe-Flint, above, former captain of the England women's cricket team, dismissed the findings and pointed out that most of the England women cricketers who play for men's club sides were selected for the second and third teams. She said: "In certain sports there is a strength element and I would be terrified if women achieved that strength. There is a physical difference between men and women that can't be ignored."



Conchita Martinez: her ranking was not high enough to justify a £340,000 bonus

Judges play tennis star off the court

By Christine Middap

THE former Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez has been denied a £340,000 bonus after three London judges ruled yesterday that she was not ranked high enough on the professional women's circuit.

Martinez, 26, who won Wimbledon five years ago, argued that she was entitled to the bonus in addition to her £1.2 million contract fee.

Under the contract with the Italian sportswear company Ellesse International, the Spanish tennis star was entitled to the bonus if she finished the year in second spot. But the three Court of Appeal judges ruled that, although she finished 1996 with an average ranking of 2.50, she was still behind Steffi Graf, with an average of 1, and Monica Seles, 1.16.

Lord Justice Clarke, a tennis fan, said: "There were two players who were well ahead of the others and who, for almost the whole year, shared the No 1 ranking. On that footing it seems to me to offend common sense to hold that the next ranked player could fairly be described as the No 2 in the world."

Martinez, now ranked 18th in the world, rose to prominence in 1994 when she won Wimbledon by defeating Martina Navratilova in the veteran player's last singles performance.

The following year Martinez signed a five-year promotional contract with Ellesse. Her £1.2 million retainer was dependent on her maintaining a world singles professional ranking in the top ten. She was also promised performance-related bonuses — £557,000 if she achieved a No 1 ranking in any one year, and £340,000 if she was ranked No 2.

Leave to appeal was refused.

NEWS IN BRIEF

£200 m road link held up

One of the first privately financed motorways, which cost £200 million to build, has been partially closed by subsidence less than two months after it was opened.

The 11-mile M1-A1 link road in West Yorkshire was hailed as a triumph of co-operation between the private and public sectors when it opened two months ahead of schedule. Yorkshire Link receives an undisclosed fee from the Government, based on the numbers of vehicles travelling on the road.

Safety drive

Police officers make fewer private motoring insurance claims than public-sector workers, according to Zurich Municipal. Of 11 professions covered, doctors made the most. Nurses, top last year, were eighth, followed by dentists and social workers.

Salmonella case

Up to £3 million has been claimed in a High Court writ by 630 food poisoning victims. Sunworld has accepted responsibility for holidays in Majorca last year being ruined by a salmonella outbreak, but compensation has not been agreed.

Drug rape fears

Police are investigating a woman's claim that she was injected with the "date rape" drug Rohypnol. A dye was put in the drug last year after attacks on women whose drinks had been spiked. The latest incident occurred in Doncaster.

Ecstasy charge

Alexander Hibbert, 25, a lorry driver, of Watford, was charged with drug trafficking in Dunkirk. French customs officers had earlier discovered almost £10 million of Ecstacy tablets and other drugs aboard a vehicle.

Pole axed

Britain's oldest known telegraph pole is to be taken down, days after its claim to fame was discovered. The pole on Culver Hill, Amberley, Gloucestershire, dates from 1886. It has started to rot and is unsafe.

Comic draws on Blyton spirit

The storyteller's daughter is fighting sci-fi heroes for young readers, writes **Alex O'Connell**

THE scantily clad, gun-toting heroes of futuristic comics are about to receive an unlikely challenge. The elder daughter of Enid Blyton, author of wholesome tales for children, is launching a comic-strip magazine that aims to revive the spirit of her mother's books.

Blue Moon, a fortnightly publication for six to ten-year-olds, gives traditional fairy-tales a 1990s twist. Gillian Baverstock, a former deputy headmistress, said: "I have not deliberately followed the spirit of Enid Blyton, but I have used the basic philosophy my mother believed in very strongly, such as stimulating children's imaginations."

It was also the philosophy, she said, of her co-director, Tim Quinn, former editor of *Spider-Man* magazine. "All the storytelling plots were devised by Tim Quinn, who was brought up on Enid Blyton's work.

"I began to realise that the beautiful colours and drawings of the old magazines were not really around any more and I thought there was a niche in the market for these illustrations."

Blue Moon will take stories such as *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Rumpelstiltskin* beyond their conventional endings. In the first issue, Jack finds an ice kingdom at the top of his beanstalk, Cinderella is sent flying by her sister Horrabella, and Rumpelstiltskin reveals a weakness for mauve tights.

Mrs Baverstock feels that the old storylines have been enhanced rather than corrupted: "I think a novelist once said there are only seven plots in all the books that have been written. And these characters are so marvellous, why can't we reuse them and recreate them?"

She plans to include verse alongside the comic strips. Future issues will include "classic poems and good modern poetry". There may also be a letters page.

She met Mr Quinn in 1994 when looking into the possibilities of a new-look Enid Blyton magazine, the original version of which she had edited between 1951 and 1958. The idea was dropped, but subsequently Mrs Baverstock became consultant editor of the BBC's *Noddy* magazine.

"I wanted something for children who were beginning to read, coming out of the Noddy age and moving into something else. I read in *The Times* that primary schools were using comics as aids for children who had reading difficulties and I found that particularly interesting."

The partners set up Quill Publications, a joint investment run partly from Mrs Baverstock's home in Ilkley, West Yorkshire, and partly from Mr Quinn's house in Shrewsbury.

It will cost £70,000 to launch the first issue, but they hope that the £1.25 magazine will pay for itself within four issues.

The children in the opening story, *The Amazing Computer*, are a far cry from the science-fiction faces and jaggedly drawn bodies of the Japanese *manga* comics that have become classroom currency. Gwen has well-brushed, straight blonde locks, freckles and sensible shoes, while her brother Arthur wears a pressed shirt under his anorak. But there are hints of childish anarchy. Gwen wears a yellow smiley face, associated with the 1980s acid house music scene, sewn into the denim bib of her dungarees.

Gwen and Arthur share the Famous Five's inquisitiveness and talent for finding mystery, as the story shows: "They were on their way to Computers! Computers! & Computers! when Gwen, Arthur and their dog Henry heard strange piping music coming from an old alley they were passing."





The adventures of the Ninja Turtles will be challenged by the fairytales of *Blue Moon*, launched by Gillian Baverstock, seen as a girl with her mother

Essential textbooks missing from the classroom

By Hannah Betts

UP TO half of all GCSE students have no access in the classroom to books covering core subjects in the national curriculum, research has shown.

A survey by Keele University reveals concerns throughout the country over inadequate state provision of books in secondary school classrooms.

The survey questioned 2,800 pupils, about 500 parents and 150 head teachers and subject heads. Although 82 per cent of head teachers believed that there was a link between textbook availability and pupil attainment, only a quarter of 13 and 14-year-olds had access to textbooks to help in doing English, history and geography homework.

At the same time, while 95 per cent of head teachers questioned said that they had no specific policy on textbook funding, 80 per cent said that they would welcome spending guidelines.

The research is backed by the School Book Alliance, a coalition of teachers, parents and education specialists that is demanding that the Government provide more books for secondary schools and spending guidelines for teachers.

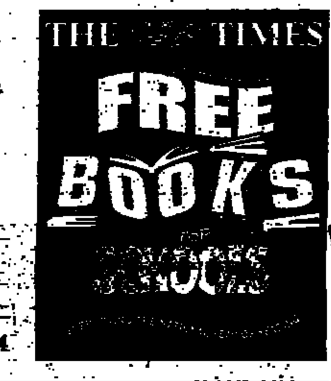
Martin Roberts, the head teacher at Cherwell School in Oxford and a member of the alliance, said: "Schools need a radical rethink of how available resources are used. One in six secondary schools spends less than £10 per pupil on textbooks each year. Central guidance on what should be spent would make a good first step. Students who have the books they need in class make better students — in terms of focus, understanding, level of interest and results."

The educational charity the Book Trust has established recommended figures of between £64 and £96 to be spent on national curriculum textbooks per pupil per year, depending on the student's age.

Jeff Holman, of the alliance, said: "Our aim is at least one textbook per subject per pupil and we urge the Government to ensure that schools are funded to a level that allows them to meet this goal."

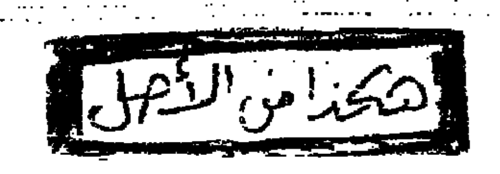
☐ *The Times* Free Books for Schools scheme, which was praised by Keele University, includes several secondary textbooks in its list of free titles. For more details call the helpline on 0845 6040312.

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LINKS

www.booktrust.org.uk Advice and information from the Book Trust, an independent charity that promotes books and reading
www.publishers.org.uk The Publishers Association; forum for publishers of all books, journals and electronic publications in the UK



Too much, too soon: the verdict on TV sex

Commercial channels' watchdog condemns 'tacky erotica', writes Raymond Snoddy

THE increasing preoccupation with sex on commercial television came under fire yesterday from the networks' regulatory body. Channel 5's late-night "low-budget erotica" attracted particular criticism.

Sir Robin Biggam, chairman of the Independent Television Commission, said in the annual review of the broadcasters' performance that there was a growing emphasis on programmes about the sex industry in the schedules. The commission was also concerned that too many programmes screened adult material immediately after the 9pm watershed. It would have been better if programmes such as *Vice: The Sex Trade* and *Trial and Retribution II* had been shown later.

The commission reserved its sternest criticism for Channel 5. Although there had been more focused investment in original programmes, sport and better film titles, there had also been a failure to provide much original drama. The commission said that it had had to intervene ten times last year over breaches of the rules on Channel 5. The most serious case was *Sex and Shopping*, which showed scenes unacceptable at any time.

The commission was also worried about "the tackiness associated with an increased use of low-budget erotic drama late in the evening and of various factual programmes on sexual themes, including some material that was unacceptable". While only a few elements of the shows had breached programme rules, "broadcasters should note early signs that their preoccupation with a single subject — any single subject — can stretch viewers' patience". Although there had been good documentaries, the intentions behind programmes such as *The Full Monty, Swindon Superbabes, Stags and Hens, On the Piste* and *Sex and Shopping* had seemed too voyeuristic.

Sir Robin said he thought "tacky" was a good word to describe some of Channel 5's late-night programmes. "It's not so much a concern, it's just low quality. It doesn't have any story attached other than the sexual theme." Asked if he was looking for a better class of soft pornography, he replied: "You could be right."

Sarah Thane, the commission's director of programmes, said that it was not against "mildly erotic programmes" that were properly made and scheduled. "It's a diversity issue. It's a quality issue."

The commission also noted that ITV's best-known programme, *Coronation Street*, had disturbed a considerable number of viewers by introducing tougher storylines concerning everything from drug abuse, transsexualism, teenage sex, verbal abuse and abduction.

Overall, the commission praised ITV for its determination to "refresh and revitalise" its service. But shortcomings in current affairs, arts and comedy still needed to be addressed. Without the programme *We Can Work It Out*, ITV would have had the lowest output of current affairs programmes on record.

Channel 4 had shown a number of promising developments after being criticised last year for a lack of innovative drive. The commission said it expected the channel to ensure "that this positive trend continues and accelerates".

Channel 5 had achieved impressive growth to 5 per cent of the audience and needed "to build on its achievements by increasing the quality and widening the range within existing programme genres".

David Elstein, chief executive of Channel 5, said that "tackiness" was a subjective judgment and that the late-night programmes were not low-budget. Channel 5 would carry on showing them.

The ITV Network Centre said it did not agree with the commission's view that there was too much emphasis on sex — at least as far as ITV was concerned.

Diary, page 20



Lady of the night: but Leila, from *Vice: The Sex Trade*, was on too early, the ITC said

We behaved badly at Christmas, BBC admits

By Richard Duce

THE BBC has admitted that its Christmas edition of *Men Behaving Badly* was likely to "offend or embarrass" some viewers. The Broadcasting Standards Commission will rule today that 18 complaints against the programme were justified.

Many of the people who complained about the episode, in which the character played by Martin Clunes apparently masturbated after watching sex videos, said the BBC should have realised that on Christmas Day, many children would have stayed up later then usual.

In its submissions to the commission the BBC accepted that sufficient warnings that the programme might offend had not been given.

☐ Cilla Black's *Moment of Truth* show on ITV is criticised by the commission for turning the suffering of a child into "entertainment". The cameras regularly captured scenes of youngsters reduced to tears when their parents failed to win them a prize.

ANGLIA
Performed strongly with the help of a fresh-look news service and a well-made new series. But too much arts coverage was concentrated in the final quarter, with little coverage of regional mainstream arts activity. The ITC will be especially monitoring arts coverage. Network output included daytime talk shows, religious programming, documentaries and dramas.

BORDER
One of the smallest ITV companies, Border provided a regional news service that identified closely with its scattered, rural communities and played an important part in keeping people in touch. *Lookaround*, a news magazine, responded quickly to stories. Apart from news, the backbone of Border's output consisted of factual and arts programmes.

CARLTON
The company's regional news service continued to be of a high standard but the main early news programme "found ratings success elusive". Carlton's supply of programmes to the network almost halved in hours, mainly because *Afternoon Live* and *The Big Story* were not recommissioned, but the company remained a major supplier in almost every category.

CENTRAL
The company introduced more diversity into current affairs, but the ITC is looking for more progress in 1999. In particular, the commission expects new series planned for this year to extend current affairs away from reliance on live studio debates. Multicultural issues featured more frequently, including a series exploring those affecting Asian viewers.

CHANNEL
Programme achievements were satisfactory at the smallest ITV company, but fewer individual programmes of note were made, partly because of the loss of senior staff in 1997. The news magazine performed strongly and, although there was less regional programming than in the previous year, it was still more than the required minimum.

GRAMPIAN
The Scottish broadcaster has been heavily criticised in the press and by MPs, with allegations that its regional identity was being eroded after the takeover by Scottish Media. The ITC found "no good evidence" that this was happening, or of reduction in quality, although it intervened to restore Highland League and shinty results, dropped without warning.

GRANADA
Granada provided a third of all network programmes and the relevance of its regional service was "not in doubt". But current affairs and education programmes included a glut of lifestyle features, particularly cooking: "It was difficult to see a truly educational aspect to these items." Some current affairs items did not meet ITC criteria and were reclassified.

HTV
Regional programmes were diverse and there was high quality in most programme strands. But the ITC would like to see more new material, especially in the drama, documentaries and features for Wales and in the drama, religion, adult education and entertainment for the West. The West's news service improved and matched the BBC regional news audience.

LWT
The London weekend broadcaster had "made welcome efforts" to create new entertainment ideas, although the audience responded most strongly to familiar formats and faces. The ITC intervened over four programmes, including *Vice: The Sex Trade* — unsuitable for 9pm — and too much violence on an edition of *The Jerry Springer Show*.

MERIDIAN
The South of England broadcaster had a very satisfactory year with a popular and high-quality service. Network supply fell, but included "to Meridian's justifiable pride the first two of its splendid *Hornblower* films". Live coverage of regional news increased and local news of national interest, such as the Russell and Billie-Jo Jenkins murders, were sensitively handled.

SCOTTISH
Its output has been criticised in the approach to the elections for a Scottish parliament, but the ITC says it has made strenuous and largely successful efforts to maintain the quality of its regional service and a strong regional identity. The appeal of arts output has been broadened and high-quality factual and social action material has been broadcast.

TYNE TEES
The North East broadcaster produced a strong on-screen performance, but attempts to turn programme ideas, including drama, into network commissions proved difficult. No evidence was found that range and quality of regional production had been hit by the Granada takeover — in fact, there were more regional programmes in 1998 than in the previous two years.

ULSTER
Responded to the momentous events in Northern Ireland with programming that was "timely and appropriate", and maintained its reputation for accurate, impartial news. Although it at last achieved a network commission, *Christmas in Omagh*, the failure to supply more was a disappointment. The coverage of the Omagh bombing won praise for its sensitivity.

WESTCOUNTRY
Met its commitments and produced a service of a generally high quality with "comprehensive and assured" regional coverage. Thirty-three programme ideas submitted to the network resulted in two commissions of *Home in the Country*. For the second year, questions were raised about standards on *Richard Digance - For One Night Only*.

YORKSHIRE
The Leeds-based broadcaster continued "a sturdily independent style" in its 30th anniversary year and first full year of Granada ownership. More new regional programmes were produced than agreed at takeover. The virtual absence of religious programming until the final quarter was "disappointing", especially given the emphasis in the licence application.

GMTV
Delivered an attractive service, maintaining its position as the most-watched service at this competitive time of the day. A more adult-orientated approach was noted. Serious news was at the core of the output — viewers turned to GMTV in greatest numbers on days of biggest events — and the year saw a notable increase in contributions from senior politicians.

British firms oppose euro, says survey

Poll mocks claim of business support, writes James Landale

ALMOST two thirds of business leaders would oppose Britain joining the single European currency if asked in a referendum today, according to an ICM opinion poll.

The survey showed that 63 per cent of 1,013 managing directors and chief executives polled would vote on behalf of their firms to keep the pound. Only 32 per cent would vote to adopt the euro.

But the poll, commissioned by Business for Sterling, the anti-euro pressure group, also reaffirmed that larger companies with substantial trade commitments in Europe tended to favour membership of the euro. However, the overall findings of the poll, published yesterday, mark a setback for the Government's campaign to persuade businessmen of the benefits of the euro.

Respondents were questioned after the Government launched its National Changeover Plan in February to encourage businesses to prepare for potential membership of the euro. The poll also marks the latest stage in the increasingly fierce battle between pro and anti-euro lobby groups to claim business support for their cause.

Business for Sterling said that the poll disproved claims by the Confederation of British Industry that most business people favoured the euro.

The 17-question poll is one of the more comprehensive of recent surveys on public attitudes to the euro. But it clearly contains questionable assertions. For example, the businessmen were told that Britain would lose control of employment law under the euro. Not surprisingly, 58 per cent said it would be a "big drawback".

ICM polled a weighted sample of senior businessmen to reflect British business across the board. Of those employing up to four people 65 per cent opposed the euro. But those with more than 250 staff were almost evenly divided, with 50 per cent in favour of the euro and 47 per cent against.

Some 58 per cent of firms which traded "a lot" in Europe supported Britain adopting the euro, while most of those which did "hardly any" trade on the Continent opposed joining the single currency.

John Redwood, the Shadow Trade Secretary, said: "This has knocked a big hole in the pro-euro cause. They have always said that we must go in because business wants it."


REUTERS

Jiang Zemin, the Chinese President, visiting Salzburg in Austria yesterday, tries out the piano that belonged to Mozart in the house where the composer was born

WORLD IN BRIEF

Mexican 'killed more than 100'

Cuernavaca, Mexico: Dozens of police cars protected a man suspected of killing more than 100 people as he was transferred to a state prison after crowds called for his blood. The case has split the residents of this southern Mexico city over the issue of the death penalty. Mexico does not have it, but victims' families are demanding it.

José Leonardo Castillo Pombo, the prosecutor, said Fernando Hernández Leyva is a suspect in kidnappings, robberies and as many as 135 killings in five southern Mexican states. The accused was said to have confessed to "over 100 murders" in his pre-trial statements and was led to prison wearing a bulletproof vest. *(AP)*

Migrant Chinese held

Hong Kong: Immigration officials here detained 132 mainland Chinese whose visas have expired after a court ruled that they can be deported even though their parentage may qualify them for permanent residence in Hong Kong. The court decision came in a case brought by 17 would-be immigrants who are seeking to confirm a ruling by Hong Kong's highest court that anyone with at least one Hong Kong parent has the right to live in the territory. *(AP)*

Kenya bans toxic fish

Nairobi: The Kenyan Government has ordered an immediate halt to the sale of fish and fish products from Lake Victoria because of poisoning, the Medical Services director, Julius Meme, announced. The statement blamed fishermen who resort to poisonous chemicals as a method of catching fish quickly. Eating the fish may cause diarrhoea, vomiting, excessive sweating, salivation, pneumonia-like symptoms and even death, the statement said. *(AFP)*

Hutu extradition plea



Arusha, Tanzania: Rwanda and Belgium have lodged extradition requests for Bernard Ntuyahaga, 47, right, a Hutu suspected of involvement in the killing of Agathe Uwilingiyimana, the Rwandan Prime Minister, and ten Belgian peacekeepers during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. He was arrested in Tanzania on charges of entering the country illegally. *(AP)*

Mercenaries triumph

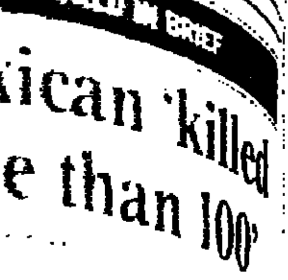
Brisbane: Papua New Guinea has lost a legal bid to overturn an order that it pay London-based Sandline International more than £11 million for its part in providing military training and equipment to help put down an insurrection on Bougainville Island. The Government is expected to appeal against the decision. Sandline has been seeking orders to freeze Papua New Guinean bank accounts and assets in Europe to enforce the ruling. *(AP)*

Smallest Net phone

Seoul: A South Korean firm unveiled what it claimed was the world's smallest Internet cellular phone, able to access and display information from the Net. The "smart phone", made by Samsung Electronics, weighs 5.5oz and has a 1.1in by 2.7in touch-screen panel capable of sending text messages and pictures. "This is the world's smallest and lightest phone using CDMA (code division multiple access) technology," Jeung Soon Hyo, a Samsung engineer, said. *(Reuters)*

Sayonara, 007

Los Angeles: Sony gave up its fight to make a James Bond film under terms of an out-of-court settlement with long-time 007 studio, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, both sides reported. MGM has a nineteenth Bond film, starring Pierce Brosnan, in the making for a November release. The dispute hinged on rights controlled by Kevin McClory, a writer and producer who produced the Bond films, *Thunderball* in 1965 and *Never Say Never Again* in 1983. *(AP)*



Should you cut up your cards?

Personal Finance Editor **Anne Ashworth** looks at the high charges of credit and charge cards; how much you could save if you controlled your Imelda Marcos-type shoe urges; why you should hold fire on Isas

More than nine million people carry a Barclaycard. Why they do so is one of the great mysteries of our age.

The popularity of the card defies explanation. This is not a flexible friend that makes the owner more stylish. Although fashionably blue, like the limited-edition Alexander McQueen American Express card sported by Kate Moss and other chums of the couturier, Barclaycard does not have quite the same cachet.

This 33-year-old credit card's secure grasp on our wallets becomes even more curious when one examines its cost. Barclaycard customers appear happy to contribute royally to the £7 million remuneration package enjoyed by Michael O'Neill, the new Barclays chief executive.

Barclaycard's standard Annual Percentage Rate (APR) is 20.9 per cent. This is close to four times the current base rate of 5.50 per cent and three times the introductory rates payable on some of the low-rate cards now available. Barclaycard also carries a £10 annual fee, waived only if you spend more than £5,000 in a year. The APR gives an indication of the true cost of any borrowing, *whether on a credit card*, a personal loan or an overdraft.

Those Barclaycard holders who spend more than the average can take advantage of slightly lower, but scarcely giveaway, rates. If you spend more than £500 in a month, for example, a rate of 16.9 per cent applies to that debt.

As Barclaycard is the King Kong of UK cards, its rates attract the most attention. But the other big banks are no more squeamish about squeezing the customer. Lloyds Bank MasterCard, for example, also has a standard rate of 20.9 per cent. A balance of more than £1,000 is charged at 19.9 per cent, a balance of more than £2,000 at 16.4 per cent. The £10 fee is waived if you spend more than £1,000 a year.

These rates explain why one disaffected holder suggested that Barclaycard's latest "Don't Put It Off, Put It On" campaign should be renamed "Don't Put It On, Cut It Up". He had just learnt how much he could save if he switched to one of the new cards. Carrying a debt of £1,000 over six months with Barclaycard means an interest bill of more than £90. At RBS Advanta, a card division of the Royal Bank of Scotland, the bill would be about £34. Perhaps Barclaycard should have retained Rowan Atkinson as the frontman for its advertising. In his role as the inept Latham from the FO, Atkinson successfully distracted *attention from* these sorts of figures.

In a market where competition has created greater consumer choice, inertia and anxiety are the main reasons why Barclaycard and the rest of its expensive posse continue to hold sway. Cardholders may be aware that they are paying too much, but balk at the form-filling necessary to apply for a cheaper card. There is also the dread of being rejected by another company and surviving without a credit card.

For those in jobs with reasonable salaries on which they cannot quite manage, these fears of being turned down are almost groundless. The new, mostly American-owned card companies eager to attract our custom are *interested in those who are* creditworthy but freespending. Goody-two-shoes who pay in full each month do not boost profits.

So keen are these upstart companies to win holders that they will accept applicants who wish to transfer debts from their old cards. The new card company repays the amount owed on behalf of the customer and allows him or her to clear the balance at a lower rate.

In the spirit of some financial spring-cleaning, you may now be contemplating giving your cards the snip. But unless you are experiencing severe repayment problems, this is too drastic a step. The right credit card, used properly, is a great modern convenience, giving as much as 56 days' free credit. Overdrafts, with their well-concealed extras, can easily be more expensive, particularly if you go into the red without the permission of your bank. Personal loans can be inflexible and may impose penalties if you repay the money early. Worst of all can be running amok in the retail park with a store card, as their rates, sometimes close to 30 per cent, make those on credit cards seem almost modest. While John Lewis's rate is a restrained *18* per cent, Marks & Spencer's cardholders pay 25.4 per cent if they settle their bills by direct debit, or 26 per cent if they pay by cheque. The rate falls to 21.5 per cent for those who owe more than £1,000. The Debenhams card has a rate of 29 per cent (direct debit) or 31 per cent for every*one else.*

Some self-analysis should allow you to establish which card suits your circumstances. But, whatever your needs, you should be looking for a card that allows the maximum free borrowing, unencumbered by loyalty schemes which are worthwhile only if you spend significant amounts.

■ The well-organised 50 per cent of the card-carrying public who pay their balances in full each month need cards without annual fees. The rate of interest is immaterial. Those who use their cards plentifully may be attracted by a card that offers a cashback of a percentage of purchases. Alliance & Leicester's Moneyback card has an APR of 17.4 per cent and returns 0.5 per cent of all purchases up to £3,000 and 1 per cent thereafter. Double points are on offer if you patronise BP, Currys, Interflora, Ticketmaster and a number of other retailers. If you need a credit limit of £3,000 plus, apply for the A&L's Gold Moneyback card.

■ Those who, despite their best intentions, repay the minimum each month need to swap to a card with a low introductory rate, taking the option to transfer debts. The discounted introductory rate will apply for a set period, usually six months. The rate is then increased. But by this time many customers have already surfed to another new card to benefit from a further discount. People's Bank of Connecticut charges 6.9 per cent until November 1999, *when the rate rises* to 17.9 per cent. The RBS Advanta rate of 6.9 per cent applies until January 2000, rising to 17.9 per cent on that date. Those with no taste for the paperwork involved in surfing should consider a card with a low flat rate. Capital One, another US-owned company, has a flat rate of 11.9 per cent which will not be increased by a set deadline. The savings to be made by switching are not effortless. Some discipline is required because there may be fees for the late payment of bills or if you exceed your credit limit.

● *CONTACTS: Times-Money website: www.times-money.co.uk; Alliance & Leicester: 0500 838383; Capital One: 0800 9525252; People's Bank: 0500 551055; RBS Advanta: 0800 077770; Credit Action (debt counselling service): 0800 591084.*



Do you pay enough attention to the cost of your credit cards? Barclaycard's advertisement with Rowan Atkinson successfully distracts attention from the high charges

The Isas of March? Wait till May

NEW LABOUR has two wholesome solutions to our reluctance to save. The first of these, the stakeholder pension — outlined in the party's manifesto two years ago — has been slow in appearing. The second, the individual savings account (Isa), breaks cover next Tuesday.

Isas were intended to turn low-income households into models of thrift, sweeping aside jargon, fees and penalties and other such deterrents to saving. Ministers boasted that families would shop for their Isas at supermarkets. But the complex rules of these supposedly simple schemes will prevent many from joining in the fun. Isas will allow savers to keep their cash from the clutches of the taxman, a service previously rendered by Peps and Tessas. You will be allowed to con*tribute £7,000 in the first year (1999-2000) and £5,000 thereafter.* Then it becomes complicated. There are two types of Isa — a maxi and a mini. You must decide which to choose at the start of the year. Under the terms of the latter, you can invest up to £3,000 in stocks and shares, £1,000 in cash (£3,000 in 1999-2000) and £1,000 in life insurance. Each element of the package can be managed by a separate manager. A maxi allows you to invest the full allowance in shares or in a mixture of cash, shares and life insurance. A maxi-Isa will have only one manager.

The maxi will have the most appeal for those who want to put more than £3,000 into shares. Those who prefer to be in cash will probably opt for the mini. Certain plans will carry the Cat-standard, a benchmark indicating that the plan has low Charges, easy Access and easy Terms and conditions. But this is no guarantee of performance. Isas will be available almost everywhere: banks, including the banking divisions of some, but not all, supermarkets; building societies; fund management companies; and in*surance companies. They would all like to sign you up as early* as possible. But do not commit yourself yet. By early May it will be easier to assess the merits of all schemes.

SUSAN EMMETT

IF YOU are not like her, you will know someone who is. One of those Imelda Marcos types who just cannot let a month go by without investing in a new pair of kitten-heel mules, Nike trainers or knee-length leather boots, depending on personal style and the season. The kind of girl who is unable to walk from one end of the high street to the other without charging her credit card in at least one shoe shop.

Shoe addiction is common and costly. Even if you are not truly extravagant, even if you can resist the wares of Stephane Kélian and Jimmy Choo, the pair-a-month shoe fetishist can spend as much as £900 a year at high street stores such as L. K. Bennett, Hobbs or Pied à Terre.

If you cut down your shoe purchases to a more reasonable four pairs a year (a couple for winter, a couple for summer — it isn't that difficult, you can always wear a couple of pairs for two seasons running), you could save about £600 a year. If you move away from the trendiest high street stores and buy slightly cheaper footwear from stockists such as Next, you could save a further £90 a year, a total of £690.

You won't be so well-heeled, but you will be able to treat yourself and a friend to a midweek break at Henlow Grange Health Farm in Bedfordshire, complete with massage and seaweed bath (£520 for two nights), or splash out on a Louis Vuitton shoulder bag with CD holder (£500) and still have almost enough cash left over to buy a pashmina from Pickett (£195).



ALEX SARGINSON

Kicking the habit: Marcos-like excess can be conquered

Or you could buy a strapless, floor-length blue silk dress, just perfect for summer and just £575, from Calvin Klein's latest collection . . .

All right, so all this swapping one extravagance for another is pointless. You should spurn the frivolous and make your shoe money work for you.

The *monthly saving of £57.50 would* take care of more than a sixth of the £298 monthly payments on a £50,000 mortgage from Cheltenham & Gloucester at 5.5 per cent. It would cover a top-of-the-range healthcare plan from BUPA at £37.28 a month for a 30-year-old single non-smoker, leaving enough cash to pay for home contents insurance (just in case someone breaks into your flat and steals your shoe collection).

You could take the long-term view and pay the money *into a personal pension fund.* A 30-year-old contributing the monthly saving to a with-profits personal pension with Standard Life could save a final figure of £40,300 by the age of 60, assuming fund growth of 6 per cent. If you assume fund growth of 9 per cent, you could have a pension fund of £67,400 by the time you reach 60. If you use the money to top up an existing plan, you will be retiring on easy street.

Investing the money in equities is also worth considering. Using past performance as a guide for what you might have been able to save, Hargreaves Lansdown, the independent financial adviser, estimates that investing the money in a UK all-share tracker fund could yield £5,363 after five years, £15,441 after ten years and £34,972 after 15 years.

Not bad going just for forgoing a bit of footwear. And if you think that the ignominy of turning up at the Met Bar in last year's mules is too much to bear, just think — after two years of saving, you'll be *able to buy a pair of to-die-for alligator* heels from Manolo Blahnik, price £1,350.

PAULA HAWKINS

NEXT WEEK:

So you think you're saving? Are you sure?

DOUG PERRINE / PLANET EARTH

Floating population: green turtles follow the same course each year en route to Ascension Island, a nesting area chosen because it is more or less free from predators

The long-distance turtles

Turtles may use magnetic fields to map an epic journey to nesting grounds on a tiny Atlantic island. **Nick Nuttall** reports

Every year about 10,000 green turtles make a dangerous and exhausting journey to a remote outpost of the British Empire in what is one of the most extraordinary feats of animal migration. They defy the elements and predators and cover huge distances to converge on Ascension Island in the Atlantic Ocean. Here they mate and hatch their young on the sandy beaches before crawling back out to sea and heading home to feeding grounds.

But where the turtles go has remained a mystery. Could it be Africa, the Caribbean or the coasts of Northern, Central or Southern America? It has remained a source of much scientific speculation — until now.

A team of British and Italian scientists have come up with answers using satellite tracking. Dr Graham Hays, from the University of Wales Swansea, and Professor Floriano Papi and Dr Paolo Luschi, from the University of Pisa in Italy, have discovered a secret "turtle motorway" running between Ascension Island and the eastern coast of Brazil, along which female turtles travel more than 2,000km. The research — funded by the Natural Environment Research Council — lends weight to the theory that turtles chart their route using either a powerful sense of smell or, like pigeons and possibly marine bacteria, they use the Earth's magnetic field to guide them.

The two biggest breeding populations of green turtles can be found in Costa Rica and on Ascension, a volcanic island and military base at which RAF planes refuel en route to the Falklands. Despite its small size — 88 sq km — and isolation, Ascension Island supports one of the largest nesting populations of green turtles in the world. Ten thousand arrive each December for the seven-month nesting season.

The green turtle is one of the largest turtle species, with carapaces or shells measuring an average 1.15 metres long and weighing as much as 300kg. Dr Hays suspects that their powerful size is related to the distances they must travel.

Previous studies have used numbered tags to try to work out where the females turtles, who meet up with the males offshore to mate, go. But these have proved unsatisfactory. So the British-Italian research team has turned to tiny satellite transmitters, weighing just 50g, which have been attached to five female green turtles. Through a link to two polar-orbiting Nasa satellites, these transmitters have revealed the extraordinary journey that takes place as the turtles leave Ascension Island between late April and early July.

Dr Hays says that all turtles — males and females — take almost the exact same route for the first 300km, forming a tight band about 20km across as they head off, and diverging slightly afterwards as they move towards separate feeding grounds. "It is almost like a turtle motorway that they follow to complete their journey as quickly as possible," he says.

It takes the animals between 33 and 47 days to cover the journey of 2,000km or so from Ascension to various feeding grounds in and around Recife in Brazil. Dr Hays says that about 50 turtles a day make the journey during the three-month period up to early July.

It was once thought that when turtles were evolving, breeding places such as Ascension Island and what is modern-day South America were far closer together. Since then, the theory goes, land masses have drifted apart, forcing the animals to swim thousands of kilometres to traditional breeding grounds that were once quite near.

But Dr Hays says this theory is now being challenged — it is far more likely that Ascension has been chosen because it is relatively free from predators, making it worthwhile for a female to undertake such an extravagant journey despite the dangers en route.

The latest research may provide clues to how the green turtle, *Chelonia mydas*, navigates on such journeys. "They may make use of the Earth's magnetic field and have some kind of mental map of the whole of the South Atlantic to help them find this small, offshore island," says Dr Hays.

Another theory is that, like salmon finding their natal stream, the turtles may be able to sniff out the smell of Ascension Island in ocean currents.

Research team members plan to use satellites again to test the rival theories. Dr Hays says they hope to attach magnets to migrating animals which interfere with the magnetic field, but which are designed to drop off after several days. Such experiments have been carried out on homing pigeons, which are also supposed to navigate using magnetic fields.

If the turtles become disorientated, "exiting the motorway" but then getting back on course once the magnets have fallen away, it would help to prove the magnetic map theory.

Dr Hays, whose findings have been published recently in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, says that even if this turtle mystery is solved, scores of others remain, including the fate of the hatchlings born on Ascension Island.

The tiny young turtles, weighing some 25g, crawl into the sea at night to avoid predatory frigate birds and swim away. But they do not have enough energy or stamina to make the journey with the adults back to Brazil, running out of steam just 24 hours from the island.

After this, they drift with currents throughout the region, snacking on whatever they can find.

"They are like little corks at this age and unable to dive much below the surface," Dr Hays explains. "They will feed on jellyfish, plankton, anything they can find."

Some may be swept to the Caribbean, others to South America and Africa, or down nearly as far as the Falkland Islands.

When they are five or six years old, it is thought they make the journey to the feeding grounds off northeast Brazil. Then, at about the age of 20, they join the mammoth trip to Ascension to breed.

The existence of the turtle motorway may have environmental implications. "The well-defined route along which they travel makes them highly vulnerable to fishing," says Dr Hays.

"So it could be disastrous if drift nets are used in the area. Even a small concentration of fishing efforts could remove all the green turtles coming and going from Ascension."

Is racism more than skin deep?

SCIENCE BRIEFING — Nigel Hawkes

RACIAL prejudice has always been regarded as a branch of abnormal psychology rather than genetics. But in a new paper, Sir Fred Hoyle and Professor Chandra Wickramasinghe, of Cardiff University, have tried to cast it in a new light. The controversial couple, who delight in provocative ideas, have published the paper on the Internet and have submitted it for publication to the *Journal of Scientific Exploration*.

The different skin tones of northern and southern people hinges on the production of the pigment melanin in the skin. The cells responsible for producing it exist in equal numbers in both black and white skin. What differs is the efficiency with which it is produced, which is genetically controlled.

Two competing effects determine whether melanin is produced or not. It protects the skin against ultraviolet radiation, which would otherwise cause skin cancer. But at the same time some ultraviolet radiation must penetrate the skin to produce vitamin D. Too little sunlight and a poor diet lead to rickets, a crippling bone disease.

When white people move to hotter climates, they are prone to skin cancer, as is seen in Australia today. And when black people move to the colder north, they run the risk of rickets. Today's good diets mostly prevent this problem but even in the 1970s Asian immigrants to the North of the UK suffered higher rates of rickets than the natives.

The option of adding vitamin D supplements to the diet was not available to our ancestors. To them, it really mattered that they were the right colour for surviving in the climatic region in which they found themselves. For much of human history the North was very cold, fringed by ice sheets. "White-skinned Nordic tribes living close to ice sheets under grey skies would have been eking out a precarious existence, grabbing whatever food they could and utilising every photon of ultraviolet from the Sun to stay alive and free from rickets," say Hoyle and Wickramasinghe.

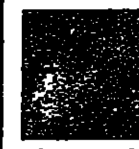
For people in the Tropics, drier Ice Age conditions with less cloud would have made for a remorseless flood of ultraviolet radiation. "Survival for them was contingent on the fullest expression of their melanin genes."

What happened, they speculate, when black and white met? Mating would have produced offspring with darker skins, on average, and thus more prone to rickets. Fewer would reach maturity, so such matings could have spelt extinction to the white population. "Under such circumstances the emergence of mating prohibitions and colour prejudice would be a natural outcome," they say.

Putting it more generally, any community under hostile circumstances survives because it adapts to the environment. This will preclude mixing with a community tuned to a separate set of conditions.

If true, the thesis means that racial prejudice is far older than religious belief or the rule of law. Changing it through the law is likely to be ineffective, the two claim. "Only by understanding the logical source of a deep-rooted, socially obtrusive prejudice does it seem possible to change it in a peaceful way."

Star-studded problem



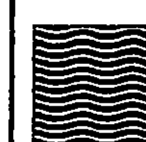
TOO many stars far from the bustle of the galaxies could spell trouble for the Big Bang theory of the Universe. Astronomers will report today in Sydney that they have found more of these stars than the Big Bang theory predicts.

A team has been looking for stars in the spaces between the galaxies. People have looked for these "lost sheep" before, says the team leader, Professor Ken Freeman of the Australian National University. "But they didn't find them."

The team found them by concentrating on stars at the end of their lives. Some 160 such objects have been found, from which it can be calculated how many ordinary stars there are between the galaxies.

The answer is far more than the conventional Big Bang theory predicts. "Even before this finding, it looked like we might have a bit too much normal matter in the Universe to fit the theory," says Freeman. "It was a borderline problem. But the extra stars we have found make it even worse."

Schelly left high and dry



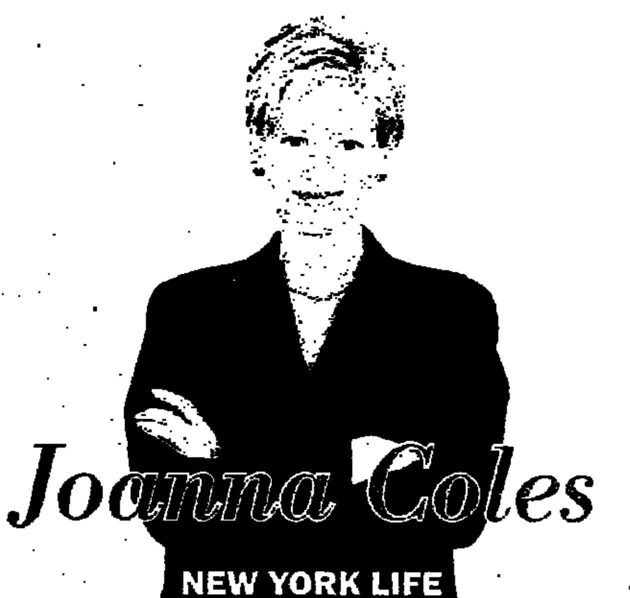
CORMORANTS, the birds that are despised by anglers who claim they beat them to the fish, are about to get some company on the shores of Hawes Water in the Lake District. The lake is home to about 50 breeding pairs and also to a rare fish, the schelly, whose numbers have been in decline for the past 25 years.

A team led by Dr Ian Winfield, of the Institute of Freshwater Ecology in Ambleside, Cumbria, has been investigating the plight of the schelly *(Coregonus lavaretus)*. He says that one problem is the rise and fall of water levels at Hawes Water, used as a reservoir by North West Water. Schelly lay eggs at the edge of the lake, but falling levels have left the eggs high and dry.

The cormorants are another threat, though as protected birds they have rights, too. The plan is to try to prevent them from nesting this spring. Just how this will be done is not yet decided, but David Crawshaw, of North West Water, says it will be no more than "low-key discouragement".

هكذا من الأصل

Why St John's is so absolutely divine



Sunday: "I thought we might go to Pets on Parade," I suggest brightly as we contemplate a baby-filled Sunday. "It's a bonnet competition for pets, sponsored by Macy's department store. Apparently the competitors go to great lengths."

"I think people who dress up their pets ought to be committed," says Peter, struggling with a pumpernickel bagel from Nussbaums and Wu. "I've no intention of encouraging them."

"We've got to get Thomas out of the apartment," I insist.

"Well, it's Palm Sunday, we could go to church," says Peter. Though both our maternal grandfathers were vicars, we are not regular churchgoers and I suspect that he is trying to curry liturgical favour in advance of applying for the christening of Thomas — a potentially tricky request given that our son was born out of wedlock. In this corner of the Upper West Side we have a choice of two churches, each boasting a superlative: Riverside Church, financed by John D. Rockefeller Jr and modelled on Chartres Cathedral, on top of whose tower swings the world's biggest carillon, with 74 bells; and St John the Divine, which is the biggest cathedral in the world (more than twice the square footage of St Paul's — in fact, it could comfortably garage the Statue of Liberty under its dome, with plenty of room to spare).

We plump for St John's, with good reason. In matters social, sexual and doctrinal, it is arguably the most liberal church in the country — so liberal that it happily hosted a pagan celebration of the winter solstice. It was busily ordaining women priests back in 1971, and gay clerics are old mitre — its detractors call it St John the *Absolutely* Divine.

As we wheel Thomas up the ramp we hear an unfamiliar sound: the chime of a stonemason's chisel on granite. For St John's, begun in 1892, is a work in progress, and if the church could raise the requisite $400 million, which it can't, it would take 50 more years to complete using medieval construction methods.

We enter the cathedral just as a huge organ fugue blasts down the neo-Gothic nave, but Thomas sleeps soundly on. A hip black acolyte in a dark Nehru suit and a gold earstud rips a palm frond from his branch and offers it to us. Another herds us to a side pew with all the panache of a security steward at a pop concert.

Then a strange thing happens: the biggest cathedral in the world fills up with people, even though it's not Christmas; it's not even Easter. And there is only a light dusting of tourists, for unlike its better-known Roman Catholic rival, St Patrick's, nestled conveniently on 5th Avenue in the crook of Saks's elbow, and only a bouquet's lob from Tiffany's, St John's is off the beaten track.

Today it is a thoroughly mixed congregation: black families from Harlem, little boys in suits, their sisters in plaits and frocks and patent-leather shoes; white yuppies from Riverside Drive in camel coats with fur trim; Columbia grad students with leather jackets and trendily ugly Joe 90 glasses. It is so full that the service sheets run out.

"Move back! Make way!" orders the acolyte, and the robed procession approaches, ranked protectively around the Bishop of New York, the Right Rev Richard F. Grein. A curate is swinging the incense thurible in the same way that Freddie Mercury used to swing his microphone, in complete arcs.

The liturgy unfolds like a passion play, in which our role is that of the crowd baying for an unenthusiatic Pontius Pilate to put Jesus to death. "Let Him be crucified!" we are required to yell, and Pilate (played by the Dean) asks: "Why, what evil has he done?", and the congregation shouts again: "Let Him be crucified!" Finally Pilate says "I am innocent of this man's blood: see to it yourselves", and we all yell "His blood be on us and on our children!" — at which point Thomas begins to cry, in protest no doubt, at the injustice that the sins of the parents be visited upon the children.

To quieten him we wheel him around the vast space. Unlike European equivalents, with their monuments to forgotten medieval battles and marble effigies of ancient knights, St John's is a contemporary cathedral with a widely cast spiritual net, and even a mission statement that hangs like campaign colours over the entrance. A national Aids memorial stands in a side chapel, dominated by a large, quilted rainbow flag, and a poster of Matthew Shephard (the gay student lynched last November in Wyoming), which reads: "Killed by homophobia." Next to it is a memorial to victims of genocide: Jews killed by Nazis in the Holocaust, represented by a skeletal metal statue, with a beseeching hand; Armenians killed by Ottoman Turks; Black Civil Rights martyrs killed by the Ku Klux Klan, and Bosnians killed by Serbs.

Other memorials honour those who died in the sinking of the *Titanic*, and in the crash of TWA Flight 800. In the north transept, beneath feathered headdresses, a sculpted bison honours Native Americans, and there are also shrines to the scions of those New York dynasties the Bloomingdales and Astors. We pause in our perambulations to listen to the sermon, preached by the Dean, Harry H. Pritchett Jr, in the lilting cadences of the American South. "There is no way around pain," he thunders, "only through it!" Again Thomas squeals his objections, so we decide that he has had sufficient brimstone for his first religious outing and retreat to Poets' Corner. "All you have to do is write one true sentence," urges Ernest Hemingway, beautifully carved into the taupe stone. To which Henry James appears to have replied: "Live all you can. It's a mistake not to."

Monday: This morning *The New York Times* solemnly carries the results of the bonnet competition. First prize was won by a black Portuguese water dog wearing a spring floral display. Best cat was Merlin, a Persian chinchilla, who wore booties and a flowered headband topped by a pair of silk rabbit's ears. And the most popular exhibit turned out to be a ferret, called Houdini, wearing a bow tie.

Fitness fix or just ego massage?

Former slouch **Magnus Linklater** feels compelled to impress his personal trainer

MIKE WILKINSON



Trainer Louise and trainee Magnus: "I can imagine her leading a route march across Salisbury Plain with the squaddies limping in her wake"

It may be guilt, it may be vanity, but a nagging conscience keeps telling me that I should be fitter. Why? I have no athletic ambitions left. I have long since ceased to imagine that my superb physique will wreak sexual havoc by the swimming pool.

I live a mostly sedentary existence, with only the occasional race for a departing train to remind me about the state of my lungs. At my age, some modest restraint on the alcoholic front and a resolution to cut back on fattening foods is surely gesture enough. Is there anything more undignified than an overweight, middle-aged man pounding the pavements in search of some half-remembered state of physical grace?

Nevertheless, here I am, in my fifties, doing precisely that. There is one simple reason: I have acquired a personal trainer. For anyone unfamiliar with the concept, this is a person who calls on you very early in the morning and forces you to do physically demanding things with your body of a kind that no sane person would readily contemplate.

It is a personalised version of the gym, with this difference: that while at a gym you shell out large sums of money and then never go, with a personal trainer there is no escape. He — or in my case, she — is always there, two mornings a week, without fail. I am aware, of course, that having a personal trainer is a routine status symbol in Beverly Hills or Belgravia, but in Edinburgh I feel I am breaking new ground. I find myself dropping casual remarks such as "as I was saying to my personal trainer only the other day . . ." or "I'm sorry I can't be with you, but nothing comes between me and my personal trainer".

There is, too, a more personal motive. I have something to prove. I cannot remember who it was who said "a man possesses nothing save a brief loan of his own body", but I would like to return mine in reasonable condition. Over the years it has been treated in a somewhat slapdash manner, and the strains are beginning to show. The springs are creaking; the paintwork needs sprucing. Time, in short, for the MoT, or personal trainer.

Louise Warrack came into my life six weeks ago, and has already transformed it. She is very fit, glamorous and demanding. The daughter of a schoolfriend, she is a former army captain, Sandhurst-trained, who has seen two years' service in Northern Ireland. She is 26.

Things have obviously changed in the officer class since I last encountered it. I somehow cannot imagine Louise downing gins and tonic in the officers' mess, but I can imagine her leading a route march across Salisbury Plain, with most of the squaddies limping in her wake. Not that she is notably muscle-bound or intimidating. Far from it — she is trim, slender and extremely polite. But firm. Once you are on your back, muscles screaming as they are forced into action at her command, there is no gainsaying her. She rates your tolerance on a scale of one to ten, with ten being a state of terminal exhaustion. She is not really happy unless you are up to eight. And making Louise happy is, I suppose, part of the deal. She arrives at 8am, wearing a sweatshirt with "Personal Trainer" on the back and carrying a heart monitor that you strap around your chest.

> The lace curtains twitch as I emerge with Louise

Immediately the symbol of a pumping heart appears on the watchface, and thereafter your every exertion is digitally reflected. At 80 you are scarcely moving. Above 170 and the paramedics should be on standby. The object is to stay somewhere in between. We prepare to hit the streets of Edinburgh at a brisk walking pace. The New Town lace curtains twitch as I emerge from my front door in the company of a fetching young lady, and I can imagine the comments: "Well, that's Mr Linklater, but I don't believe that's Mrs Linklater." As we reach the Water of Leith the watchface shows 120. Louise suggests "a gentle jog".

It is a truth universally acknowledged that one of the more absurd aspects of the male character is his need to impress the female with demonstrations of his physical prowess, particularly if she happens to be half his age. Thus my gentle jog begins at Linford Christie pace and ends shortly afterwards with me bent double and the heart monitor veering wildly into the 180s. "How would you rate that on a scale of one to ten?" asks Louise solicitously. "Oh, barely touched six," I wheeze. "Nevertheless, perhaps we should slow it down a little," she suggests. I nod vigorously. Words don't come easily at such moments.

On the way back we stop at intervals to do little push-ups by the roadside, to the amazement of passers-by and my own acute embarrassment. Louise is very good at morale-boosting remarks on these occasions. "Good, well done. What an improvement," she murmurs encouragingly. I glow with pride. As soon as we are back inside, we lie together on the floor, contracting our bodies into unusual positions. Muscles that thought they had long since been retired are pressed back into action. Legs are swung, knees bent, calves stretched, backs arched. There is much pain involved but no little satisfaction, too. After all, if you had never thought to rest your hands palms-down on the ground while bending from the waist with legs straight, then doing so becomes a small personal triumph. And if you can then get up again, why, that's another ambition fulfilled.

I now find I am becoming curious about Louise's other clients. Does she say the same flattering things to them? Are they improving faster, slower or not at all? She is, however, maddeningly discreet, and thus far I have elicited few personal details. Which, I suppose, is just as well. After all, one's personal trainer knows more about one's body than anyone else apart from one's wife, and there are certain intimate details about my physique that I would prefer not to become the talk of the town.

Of course, you may argue, I could do all those things on my own. Why pay £25 an hour when you could be your own personal trainer for nothing? I have thought about that, and can find no rational answer. Except that I know I would never do it.

Partnership puts Nato to the test

Richard Beeston on the shared foes of Milosevic and Primakov

If Nato planners thought cloudy weather and Serb military might would present the toughest challenge to their bomber pilots, they miscalculated. The greatest threat to the alliance's ability to force President Milosevic to back down emerged yesterday in the unlikely form of a round, stern-faced Russian with one of the sharpest minds in international diplomacy.

Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Prime Minister, succeeded in the space of six hours of talks in Belgrade in hatch a plan aimed at the alliance's faultlines. It could prove more damaging to the allied air effort than the notorious Balkans weather or a battery of SAM missiles.

Details of the deal, effectively an offer by the Serbs to halt their ethnic cleansing in return for a Nato ceasefire, is aimed at splitting Nato's resolve, just when the alliance is ready to step up its operations and seriously damage Belgrade's military capability.

The only surprise is that it has taken the odd couple of Mr Primakov and Mr Milosevic this long to get round to it. In the post-Cold War period the two former communists have shown an impressive ability to read Western public opinion and divide the supposedly solid resolve of Bonn, London, Paris and Washington.

Much has been made of the so-called ancient alliance between Russia and Serbia, forged between the Slavic, Orthodox brethen who have been thrown together by history in times of trouble.

> Both men want to confuse and thwart the West

The truth is that there is little romantic or spiritual in the current partnership. As one Russian colleague pointed out, supporting the Serbs can be an expensive business. The last time Russia threw its weight behind Belgrade, the Tsar was dragged into the First World War, which precipitated the Russian Revolution and led to 70 years of communism. For their part the Serbs still remember being "liberated" by Soviet troops in 1944, an occasion for Red Army soldiers to go on a raping spree across the city.

Nevertheless, the ties that bond Mr Primakov and Mr Milosevic are strong. Both are driven by a mutual desire to confuse and thwart efforts by the West to involve itself in their affairs.

Mr Primakov can claim to be the father of the post-Cold War doctrine of "divide and confuse". Just when coalition forces were poised to go to war against Iraq in January 1991, he was sent by President Gorbachev to persuade his old friend President Saddam Hussein to withdraw his forces from Kuwait. It was only thanks to the Iraqi leader's slim grasp of international politics that he failed to take the advice. Western leaders confessed later that his plan would have brought Operation Desert Storm to a halt before it had even begun.

If the policy was Mr Primakov's brainchild, then Mr Milosevic has to claim credit for mastering its use. Over the past eight years newspaper archives have recorded page after page of empty threats and frustrated Western initiatives intended to halt Serb offensives and massacres in the former Yugoslavia. In nearly every instance Mr Milosevic succeeded in giving away just enough to break Western resolve, and reducing Nato's once solid alliance into an unseemly assortment of squabbling partners.

Mr Primakov has not been idle, however. After serving as the director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service he was moved to head the Foreign Ministry in Moscow in 1996. He quickly realigned Russia's foreign policy away from its pro-Western position.

Strongly opposed to Nato's eastward expansion, he also sought to strengthen ties with China and India while re-establish frayed links with former Soviet republics. In world affairs, his big success came last year when he negotiated a compromise between the UN and Iraq, forestalling imminent airstrikes by Britain and America.

Yesterday's offer or a deal may still take some days to refine and promote in the capitals of the West, but Mr Primakov and Mr Milosevic may have correctly judged that Western determination could once again be unpicked.

Among Nato nations, Greece and Italy are already in favour of halting the attacks, France is openly supportive of the Primakov initiative and many of the smaller alliance members will need little prodding to agree to a ceasefire. The alternative, hinted at darkly as the need to mobilise a huge ground force, is enough to make even the toughest Balkans poker player throw in his hand.

For Russia, Kosovo is a battle Moscow cannot afford to lose. What happens in a burning Yugoslav province could well decide the balance of power in the East. At stake is whether the next century will see other former Warsaw Pact members and even Soviet republics join Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, in the ranks of Nato.

For Mr Primakov, a victory will be a crowning achievement which could help to deflect attention away from his poor handling of the economy and establish him as the undisputed successor to President Yeltsin.

As for Mr Milosevic his forces have nearly achieved their objective of forcing out the Albanian population from their homes in Kosovo. Despite his pledge to allow refugees to return home, his bloody legacy suggests otherwise. The tens of thousands of refugees who have been burnt out of their farms, raped and shelled will not easily be persuaded to walk back over the mountains.

For now, President Clinton has rejected the Primakov-Milosevic offer. But the two will keep trying to divide the West, hoping that they can sow doubt in the alliance before Nato finally has the force it needs in place and the weather clears over the Balkans.

comment@the-times.co.uk





DILEMMA
Peter Brookes 31 iii 99

Parasites and peddlers

Biographers are the lowest form of literary life, demeaning both subject and reader, says Michael Holroyd

In an article for the *New York Review of Books*, John Updike recently set out to attack biography. Even the best biographies were too long, he suggested, and what was the point of them anyway? They did not really sell. They were not really needed. All that literary biographies could do was to send readers back to the subjects' own books. In short: they were reminders — and remainders.

Those last words are mine, not John Updike's. For such was his good nature, and such had been his enjoyment of, for example, George Painter's *Life of Proust*, that his attack turned into an affectionate single cheer for biography — rather in the manner of E.M. Forster's two cheers for democracy.

But I believe I can do better than that: I can quench that single cheer, because I can attack biography from the inside. The truth is that biographers flatter themselves — after all, no one else will. They regard themselves as saints apparently because they are always thinking of other people. And yet they are not universally popular nor greatly loved. "Every man has his disciples," Oscar Wilde famously said, "and it is always Judas who writes the biography." George Eliot too declared that "biographers are generally a disease of English literature" — and this despite the fact that she lived happily with Goethe's biographer, G.H. Lewes. But she was speaking collectively, not about her single exception. Nevertheless, all biographers believe that they are that single exception.

All this invective, these insults, are perversely worn by biographers as if they were battle honours. Yet it is a battle they have not won. For this artillery of abuse has multiplied and magnified during this century, and it looks as though it will be a good growth area for the verbal armaments industry of the 21st century. Rebecca West, for example, pictured biographers profitably picnicking round the tombstones of the newly dead; and Germaine Greer, who dismissed biographies as "predigested carrion", later called on biographers to take up, for God's sake, an honourable trade. Did they, I ask, go far enough? And what, in any case, provokes this barrage of hostility?

In rough and ready terms there are, I believe, three categories of biographer. First comes the biographer who writes about the very famous, either among the living, or the warm dead. This class of biographer keeps company with film stars, murderers and the Royal Family. What people chiefly hate about them is that they make a lot of money. For surely they make it in a highly dubious way? They trade on others' miseries, dine out on their tragedies and make the trivial perpetually portentous.

They also exploit our own weaknesses, our prurience, our snobbery. They are our worst selves. They encourage us to behave badly, indeed they count on it. They are the virtual receivers, these biographers, of stolen money. They do not make money, they take money. And it is tainted money. We pay these writers for our addictions: they are our suppliers.

> Every man has disciples and Judas always writes the biography

Nor are they proper writers, but simply *jumped-up journalists* — the illegitimate descendants of Boswell, that keeper of a great journal. They used to be called "Grub-Street biographers": creatures that inhabited the slum end of Fleet Street, and who, in the words of Joseph Addison (the owner of *The Spectator* magazine in the early 18th century), "watch for the death of a great man, like so many undertakers, on purpose to make a penny of him". It was impossible, he added, to reflect on this sort of writer without growing indignation as well as contempt.

So not much has changed. These biographers still sway to the music of fashion, bringing down the mighty from their high places when it is safe and popular to do so: but allowing us to rise into a world of myth and vanity when it best serves their advantage. And always they take the easy way: purveying the simple story of romantic rumour and scandalous speculation pepped up, whenever the plot sags, by decorative invention. They thrive in an infantile climate where the cult of youth roams unmocked, unchecked. For they are writing fairy stories for adults who never grow up. These are the most newsworthy biographers of our own day and perhaps the easiest to attack. Fat sitting ducks.

But what of contemporary historical biographers, the political biographers of some last-but-one prime minister? They are easily recognised hybrids with one foot in a university, the other in Downing Street. This is the second category of biographer. The ambitious professor. Is he, is she, any better? Are they not trying to get the sales of the Grub-Street merchants without their street-vulgarity — the one jumped-up, the other dumbed-down?

Certainly these almost-instant political biographers are not greatly esteemed by their peers. They are looked down on by other historians who write for their academic selves, *and they attract little* interest from the self-employed professional biographers who write for almost no one. They are at the shallow end of history, steering close to what is called the Cleopatra's Nose school of history (the notion, masquerading as an ideology, that had Cleopatra's nose been a fraction longer, as long as say Pinocchio's nose became, or as long as Cyrano de Bergerac's was, then the course of history would have been dramatically changed). Can you get much more superficial than that? Even with a host of reference notes? It is the sort of history that film-makers love, the television history served with music and a grave narrator.

There is something curiously obsequious too about these all-but-instant historians. They appear to promise statesmen and prime ministers — particularly prime ministers — a good end-of-term report, a favourable verdict, in return for a few invitations, a few decorations. But they are really history's butlers, continually absorbed by their duty of rating the events they announce in order of conventional importance, always busy solemnly ushering in the facts, for ever replete with their ceremonious duties. These scribes are eternally guarding their self-esteem, like Admirable Crichtons, by reminding themselves of their intellectual superiority from their socially inferior position when they return to their islands of academe. What a crew! A pox on the lot of them!

Finally, there is the third category, the literary or artistic biographer. Surely they are better. Do they not go back to Dr Johnson? Are they not part of our literature? It is true that, like the poor, they seem always to have been with us. But the answer as to whether they are part of our contemporary literature is a resounding "No"!

Ask any novelist, poet or playwright what he or she thinks about such biographers and you will not have to wait long for a heartfelt answer. Biographers are parasites. They are fifth column agents within the ranks of literature, intent on reducing all that is imaginative, and all that is creative in literature, to pedestrian autobiography. They are the slaves of their absurd and meagre theories. They feed off literature — they try to replace it.

They rob us also of enchantment — they are continually trying to explain how the rabbit got into the hat before the novelist or poet produces the magic, and they pervert the poet's creative imagination by presenting it as a mere conjuring trick. They overlook Marlowe's mighty line, and tell us with immense scholarship and at vastly tedious length what Byron had for breakfast.

They are at best superfluous, these literary biographers with their talentless, dust-jacket smiles. For the essential truth is simple: Flaubert was born, Flaubert wrote his novel, Flaubert died. It is his work, which is unique, that matters, not the ordinary experience which he shared with so many others. That may be a branch of sociology which itself is a jigsaw with a thousand pieces of biography in it.

Michael Holroyd is author of biographies of Bernard Shaw *and* Lytton Strachey. *This article is an extract from a talk given to the Biographers' Club.*

comment@the-times.co.uk

Simon Jenkins is away.

'It is pathetic that the FA now permits mixed teams but, as soon as the menstrual cycle strikes, girls are out'

Alyson Rudd

I do it all the time, contemplate how successful and famous a footballer I would now be had my childhood been different. The "if only" syndrome takes hold of everyone at some point. If only the babysitter had not run off with Dad, if only I had never agreed to drive Sid home after he robbed the post office. And now a report in the *Journal of Sports Medicine* argues that if only women had never been physiologically analysed, they would be faster and stronger and more competitive.

Anatomists with an agenda apparently promoted the differences between men and women. As sport became more organised and more significant as a symbol of national prowess, women were being told to rest their wombs and soothe their hormones or, if they insisted on becoming involved, to make the sandwiches. This may all be true and anatomist may well have once been a pseudonym for misogynist. But a woman's ability to carry a child rendered her the quiet, stay-at-home, nurturing type long before scientists discovered our extra layer of subcutaneous fat and PMT.

What is interesting is that women were being warned about exertion at a time when today's rules of sport were being thrashed out. It is not entirely fatuous to argue that had women been competing in marathons for as long as men their performances would compare more favourably, as each year the improvement in women's times for long distance races is more than double that of the improvement in men's. Are women simply catching up on themselves because they did not compete until the 1960s or are they catching up with the men? Modern anatomists argue that women's bodies are better suited to arduous running and could therefore overtake men — gasping for breath and mopping their brows in a most effete fashion — in super-marathons. That is assuming, of course, they all start the race at the same time.

The marathon fits the journal's theory best. Most other sport is about power. The fittest, strongest man will always have the edge over the fittest, strongest woman and it is that fact rather than old wives' tales about running ruining your uterus that keeps the sexes apart in competition.

The real question should be whether that is a good enough reason for separating us. And it is not. In every race someone crosses the line last. Families grouped around the TV to watch the Olympics have always uttered "oh the poor love" as the best male athlete Honduras can provide is lapped twice over. At least half, maybe more, of the women competing in the equivalent race would have beaten him so why not give them the chance? Would it really matter if 49 times out of 50 a man won gold and silver and a woman took bronze and sixth place?

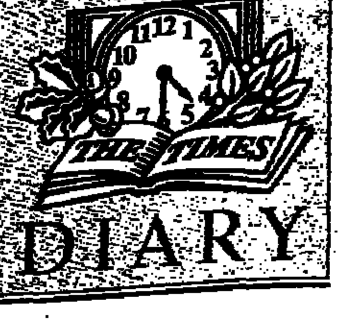
There are events which only black athletes win because their fast twitch muscles twitch faster than those of white athletes, but no one is suggesting we have black-only races. No doubt Fascist anatomists would have recommended that such muscles be surgically removed had they spotted them, but curiously it is women who have suffered more than any other "minority" when it comes to sport. This is particularly evident in team sports. I have played alongside men against all-male opposition in football matches and I have been on the winning side, and even been man of the match. Take a look at any football team, Premiership or pub side, and you will see at least one player who is shorter, fatter, slower or slimmer, but who is there because he can conjure a peach of a shot at a set piece or scrap better than anyone when it is muddy and the midfield is crowded.

But I can only play with men in friendlies in the park or in leagues not affiliated to the Football Association. The FA now permits mixed teams but, as soon as the menstrual cycle strikes, girls are out. This is every bit as pathetic as the conclusions the hormone scientists drew in the 1920s.

There are physiological differences between the sexes but this matters only at the highest level; below that there are a multitude of shapes and sizes and mentalities of men and women, so let them run and jump and shoot together. Some will take a short break while they have a baby but then some will disappear while they nurse a groin strain or a broken leg. In the three months before you break a limb your stamina does not improve, but in the three months after conception it does. Indeed until the sixth month of my current pregnancy my overall performance on the pitch was quite superb.

If only sport had never become so obsessed with segregation, if only a man could shake the hand of the woman who bowled him out without feeling suicidal, if only.

comment@the-times.co.uk



Crown affair

UNEASY lies the head. Buckingham Palace modernisers are pushing for the monarch to be stripped of her crown when she opens the Scottish parliament in July. Mary Francis, the Queen's deputy private secretary, who wants to keep the beano low-key, suggested a crownly compromise: that a child carry it before the Queen.

Word reached the Lord Lyon, Sir Malcolm Innes, one of the working group organising things. "That would be illegal," he said firmly. Debate rages. Over to Lord St John of Fawsley: "She should wear it on her head to reflect the links between Scotland and the monarchy. I don't think a child should carry it. They might drop it."

CRISIS at International Who's Who: *Slobodan Milosevic has not answered its questionnaire on hobbies. How about "genocide"?*





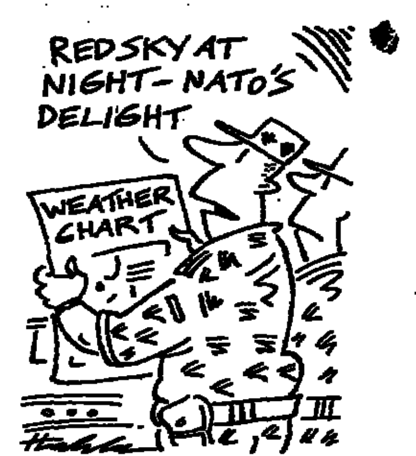
■ SHOULD Kirsty Young win a radio industry award for her breakfast show on Talk Radio, no one will be more surprised than Kelvin MacKenzie. The head of the radio station and the Channel 5 presenter (above) said a sad goodbye soon after Kelvin breezed in last summer. Young quit after she realised MacKenzie would not be showing her the star treatment to which she had become accustomed.

She had been allowed to appear only four days a week and then planned to take much of the summer off. The station reckons she presented the show only 60 times and failed to boost listeners.

But Young's many admirers put her up for a Sony Radio Award, which will be handed out next month. "If she wins the award," MacKenzie ventures "it will show the award is not worth putting up on your lavatory wall."

IS SWIMMING with dolphins great therapy after all? Wayne Sleep has sprained his ankle while enjoying a pas de deux *with a leathery beast off Florida. He landed flat-footed in the water, which has forced him to pull out of rehearsals for* Aspects of Dance.

■ KATE WINSLET will join inhalers at a mammoth garden party for chain-smokers. The actress, something of a "celebrity puffer", will be among guests at a summer ball on a Thames islet to promote "tolerance for tobacco addicts". Forest, pro-puffing coughers, is to rename the Kingston mudbank "Smokers Haven". Anti-faggers are pleased: "It means we won't be forced to breathe their smoke," says one butt.



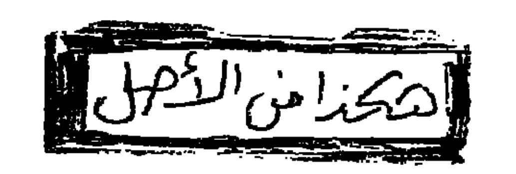
■ COFFINS are set to get bigger to accommodate the expanding British waistline. The statutory 28in-wide coffin is proving cramped for hefty sorts. A pilot study in Wales has tried outsize coffins, but pollution checks are planned to monitor levels of "harmful emissions".

Elsewhere, coffin-makers are sneakily making wider boxes, but crematoriums are struggling: their descending coffin lifts are not wide enough. "It's causing embarrassment," says Paul Stubbs, technical adviser for the Federation of British Cremation Authorities.

CLARE SHORT recovered from a speech about the poverty of Kosovan refugees in true Labour style: lunch at Christopher's.

■ WAR on both fronts for George Robertson. After the Defence Secretary's wife objected to a Dunblane memorial play area near their home, the Robertsons have moved across town. Mrs R worried that it would bring traffic, and the plods fretted about ministerial security. "Their moving house has nothing to do with the siting of the playground," I am assured.

JASPER GERARD





FEINT AND THRUST

Milosevic's offer is just a ploy to split Nato

Urged on by Yevgeni Primakov, Slobodan Milosevic made his first offer to Nato last night. His demands — that Nato first stop bombing, in return for a promise that he would then gradually reduce Serb forces in Kosovo and permit its "Yugoslav citizens" to go home — would have been unacceptable before he put Kosovo to the torch. They are both offensive and inadequate now. Mr Milosevic knows that; this is no surrender, but a feint designed to split the Alliance.

His timing is, as usual, tactically shrewd. The accounts given by the battered, traumatised refugees streaming out of Kosovo are evidence that an entire people is being persecuted with racist cruelty: it would be psychotic, were it not deliberate and premeditated. But, as Mr Milosevic doubtless intended, this humanitarian Armageddon has also sapped public trust in Nato's claim to be stopping a human tragedy. Nato's weaker minds may thus be tempted to pause and explore. Until Mr Milosevic silences and removes the guns and accepts the presence of Nato-led peacekeepers, there is nothing to explore.

Nato, and Western publics, should keep the past decade of broken Milosevic pledges clearly in mind, and keep their nerve. Had Nato not been about to bomb last October, Kosovo would have been gutted long since; Serb forces had already destroyed dozens of villages and driven 300,000 people into the icy hills. There they would have remained, and starved, had not the threat of force exacted from Mr Milosevic a pledge to pull back his forces and admit international observers. But this, like yesterday's manoeuvre, was only tactical. By January he was actively preparing a still more ruthless offensive. Over the next month, while his aides dragged out talks on an accord Mr Milosevic had no intention of signing, his forces drove out 65,000 more refugees, bringing the total back up to 300,000.

It was this indisputable evidence that, in violation of every international convention governing the treatment of civilians in war, a murderous campaign was under way that forced Nato to act. Had the Alliance held off, it would, as Tony Blair said, "have shown unpardonable weakness and dereliction". Its critics would today be drawing comparisons with the neglected genocide in Rwanda. Nato's credibility as a force for European stability would be in shreds. The whole of Europe would be a more dangerous place. That is why Nato's imperative is strategic as well as humanitarian; and it is vital that the immediate emergency should not obscure the strong national and strategic interest in extinguishing, later than was wise and thus at heavy cost, this southern European blaze.

Mr Blair has drawn parallels with 1914, the shot in Sarajevo that echoed round the world. It is not exact; it is no longer a case of the decaying Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires providing tinder. But the long-feared explosion in Kosovo has dire implications for Nato's southern flank, where Greece and Turkey nurse old hatreds. That is not because of the risks of a Greater Albania — the least likely scenario — but because the uprooting of up to two million Albanians would fracture delicate political balances in a neighbourhood of melting-pot politics and disputed frontiers.

Macedonia has done much to integrate its large Albanian minority; but a permanent doubling of its Albanian population could reignite communal intolerance. Greece has barely been persuaded to recognise Macedonia at all; and Bulgaria also has old territorial claims on it; Turkey, which is deeply aroused by the plight of the 60-70,000 ethnic Turks in Kosovo, has claims on Bulgaria. All these states are now backing Nato, but if Macedonia imploded, or if Belgrade went to the "defence" of Macedonian fellow-Serbs, they could be tempted to intervene.

Nato's engagement is vital in this context: and not only in this context. Respect for the Alliance is at stake not just in Europe, but in the Islamic world, where any perception that Nato ignores atrocities against Muslims feeds anti-Western sentiment. And in America, after the transatlantic crisis over Bosnia in 1982-83, Nato's European members cannot afford the charge that here was another European mess that they were not prepared to do enough about. The best riposte to Mr Milosevic is to rehearse these strategic arguments steadily and clearly, while intensifying the air campaign. This time, he has winked; next, he will blink. Nato must wait for his capitulation.

PORTILLO FOR CHAIRMAN

Hague needs an early and radical Shadow Cabinet reshuffle

In the past few weeks William Hague has acquired a fresh approach to politics and a new spokeswoman. It is too early to tell what the impact of either his "kitchen table Conservatism" or Amanda Platell will be. In both cases the change will be limited for as long as the Conservative leader retains the same front bench players. Although he conducted an extensive reshuffle last year, Mr Hague's team is still more Shadow than Cabinet. Sir Norman Fowler, the Shadow Home Secretary, is serving in his post out of loyalty alone, not ambition. Michael Howard, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, has announced his intention to return to the back benches. Because of this, the Conservative response to events has, at least in part, been hampered.

That alone should offer Mr Hague an incentive to conduct his next reshuffle earlier rather than later. The party will shortly face a by-election in Newark — probably on May 6 — where victory is critical for Mr Hague's credibility. A mid-term defeat in a marginal seat, where the sitting MP was convicted of electoral corruption and when the whole of the local Labour Party has since been suspended, would be an absolute humiliation. Mr Hague needs a new and attractive team before the Newark contest.

There are a number of options available for the position of Shadow Home Secretary. A case can be made for Ann Widdecombe, on the basis of her previous tenure in that department under John Major, or for Liam Fox, who could use the portfolio to develop Conservative thinking on constitutional issues. The question of Shadow Foreign Secretary is much more problematic. The ideal candidate has to be of a certain seniority but not intimately associated with the Major era. The same person should provide a sharp contrast with Robin Cook while not holding views on European monetary union that might exacerbate internal Tory divisions.

Michael Ancram is one possible contender who can meet all these conditions. He is thus a compelling candidate for Shadow Foreign Secretary. His promotion would produce a vacancy for Conservative Party Chairman. The Tory leader should regard this as an opportunity. There is no requirement for this post to be filled by a Member of Parliament. Mr Hague is free to think creatively and appoint the person who would best suit his new approach. This freedom should lead him to the door of Michael Portillo.

There will be some in Mr Hague's circle who fear that elevating Mr Portillo in this fashion offers a hostage to fortune. It could invite an ongoing comparison between the two men that was not always flattering to the Tory leader. This is a short-sighted argument. The Conservatives desperately need a chairman with strong presentational skills and the managerial ability to impose some discipline on its sluggish review of policy. Mr Portillo's arrival in Smith Square would provide a huge boost to party morale before crucial elections. This would be a bold appointment and one that required Mr Hague to show courage and self-confidence. These are not unreasonable qualities to ask of a politician who aspires to the position of Prime Minister.

REPENT AND REVISE

Local authorities need freedom to build fewer new homes

Nothing in life is certain apart from death, taxes, and the need to rewrite Whitehall forecasts. After double-checking the Civil Service's crystal ball, which previously predicted that 4.4 million new homes would be needed by 2016, John Prescott now estimates that 3.8 million homes will be required by 2021. The forecast is so sensitive to changes in the key assumptions that even this is "not a precise figure", according to the mystic minister. Mr Prescott's candour is welcome. By acknowledging the unreliability of statistics, he has underscored the flaws of trying to predict and provide for new housing, an approach he claims is now "dead".

Any congratulations, however, should be muted. England's green fields are still at risk. The number of households in England is now projected to rise by a fifth between 1996 and 2021. Ministers, rightly, want to build 60 per cent of these homes in urban areas. Local authorities will be required to consider re-using existing property and brownfield sites before releasing greenfield land. But even then, building the remaining 40 per cent would ashphalt over rural land almost four times the size of Milton Keynes. Local authorities have already developed, or earmarked, vast tracts of countryside. In the South East, land for 800,000 dwellings forecast as required has been built upon or set aside.

The new figures give rise to doubts as to whether all this land will be needed. The 3.8 million figure, as Mr Prescott admits, "could be subject to some variability". The figures are heavily dependent on the most volatile assumptions. A 1 per cent rise in interest rates, for example, could cut the number of households forming by about 250,000. A 1 per cent fall in unemployment could result in household formation rising by 30,000. Mr Prescott is therefore wise to caution planners to use the forecasts simply to "inform debate".

In that debate, Mr Prescott should allow local authorities to adjust their regional plans to reflect these new figures. After the warnings attached to these predictions, planners should not be forced to increase the number of homes they intend to provide so as to meet a putative, dubious need. Only by permitting such flexibilility will Mr Prescott prove that the era of predicting and providing is truly over.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Moral imperative to tackle Kosovo's human tragedy

From the Most Reverend the Lord Eames, Archbishop of Armagh

Sir, During the House of Lords debate on Kosovo on March 25, I referred to the commonly expressed justification for the Nato action in Serbia as "international humanitarian intervention". But I felt it necessary to draw attention to another factor which even then I believed required international humanitarian intervention, viz the human tragedy of refugees and displaced persons who, in their thousands, were beginning to flood across the Balkans. In the days since that debate my fears have been realised to an extent that none of us could have imagined.

I believe that the military action of the Allies was justified in the terms and limitations of "the just war" but that, given the magnitude of the human tragedy of Kosovo, there is a moral imperative on the Allies, and in particular the United Kingdom, to initiate humanitarian relief to meet the largest displacement of human beings since the Second World War.

I believe the Government must not only take a lead in this respect but be seen to do so. It is not just on military action that we will be judged by future generations.

Yours etc,
† ROBERT ARMAGH:,
House of Lords.
March 30.

From Ms Rosalie Huzzard

Sir, The result of Nato bombing has been more barbarity and killings in Kosovo, more refugees, destruction and death in Yugoslav cities and the threat of the conflict spreading to Macedonia. Russia has severed relations with Nato. Milosevic is consolidating his position as war leader. A land war looms and no one knows what the outcome will be

We are told there was no alternative — the Serbs refused to negotiate. But there is always an alternative. The mediation and reconciliation process through the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) could have been supported more wholeheartedly and for a longer period.

Yours sincerely,
ROSALIE HUZZARD
(Secretary, British Section),
Women's International League
for Peace & Freedom,
37 Hollingworth Road,
Petts Wood, Orpington BR5 1AQ.
29 March.

From Mrs Mara Johnstone

Sir, When Krajina was "ethnically cleansed" by the Croatian Army, my aunt was one of the hundreds of thousands who fled through Bosnia to reach safety a week later in Serbia.

There was no suggestion then that the Croats should be bombed by Nato forces. However, my aunt is now faced with Nato bombing, as a refugee, in Belgrade.

Why does Nato uphold such double standards?

Yours faithfully,
M. JOHNSTONE,
Chapel Hill,
Penton, Carlisle CA6 5QP.
March 29.

From Mr Christopher Ellis

Sir, It's a bit rich for Nato to use the intensification of horror in Kosovo as a justification for the continuing bombing of Serbia and Kosovo when it has been the bombing itself that has caused the intensification, entirely predictably. The bombing has only served to make the situation worse.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER ELLIS,
18 Upper Old Park Lane,
Farnham, Surrey GU9 0AT.
cellis10@compuserve.com
March 29.

From Dom Aldhelm Cameron-Brown, OSB

Sir, Is it not a little ridiculous that we are trying to bomb a foreign government into submission, when we cannot even control paramilitary terrorists and their punishment beatings on our own soil?

Yours sadly,
Fr ALDHELM,
Prinknash Abbey,
Cranham, Gloucester GL4 8EX.
March 27.

From Mr R. J. Staples

Sir, By calling Nato's political leaders "populist" does Mr Robin Edwards (letter, March 26) mean that they are democratically elected? Are the wishes of the majority always to be regarded with such disdain? Democracy should mean more than the people being ignored between elections every four or five years.

Yours truly,
R. J. STAPLES,
59 Monkseaton Drive,
Whitley Bay, NE26 1SY.
staples@whitleybay.freeserve.co.uk
March 26.

From Mr Richard Hogg

Sir, Members of our Armed Forces trust the politicians to ask them to risk their lives in legitimate circumstances. As an infantry officer in the 1970s I was happy to serve in Nato as an alliance for the defence of Europe, and to be involved in other conflicts where Britain had a legitimate right of intervention.

I believe the current intervention in Yugoslavia is a betrayal of this trust. British lives are being put at risk in a venture that can only be justified as in the national interest through dubious logic and, for the first time, puts Nato in the position of an aggressor. My military training also taught me that it was unacceptable to get involved in others' civil wars. While holding no brief for Milosevic, I regard the credibility of Nato as a defensive alliance — rather than a figleaf to legitimise US global police action — as far more important.

For the first time in my life I cannot support an action involving British Forces. Our political masters have let us down badly by blindly following America.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD HOGG,
Lower Farm, Duckington,
Malpas, Cheshire SY14 8LQ.
richardhogg@msn.com
March 30.

From Mr Mike Kemp

Sir, Whilst I agree with the sentiment expressed by Victor Black (letter, March 26) regarding military action to constrain aggression, his historical analogy with the Saar in 1935 is both inapplicable and inaccurate.

The Saar was placed under international control at the end of the First World War with an agreement to hold a plebiscite on its future status 15 years later. This plebiscite was duly conducted in 1935. The result was a 90.8 per cent vote for reunion with Germany. The territory was not, therefore, annexed by Hitler.

The ethnic composition of the Saar was and is over 95 per cent German, whereas the ethnic composition of Kosovo today is about 90 per cent Albanian.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE KEMP,
3 Ashburnham Park,
Esher, Surrey KT10 9TW.
March 26.

From Mr Dave Hepworth

Sir, Isn't it unspeakably depressing that, on the brink of the third millennium, we are still resorting to the methods of the first in attempting to solve political problems through force of arms? Only our capacity for destruction seems to have developed significantly in the intervening period.

Yours faithfully,
DAVE HEPWORTH,
Wayside, Mires Lane,
Rowland, Bakewell DE45 1NP.
March 30.

Two Houses or Commons only?

From Mr Richard A. Edwards

Sir, Peter Riddell is quite right to suggest that the House of Lords needs bold reform (article, March 29). However, the hybrid chamber which he seems to favour is far from that. Allowing even a third of a new Upper House to be constituted by executive patronage can hardly be said to be a triumph for either democracy or radical reform.

Instead a truly radical blueprint would be based on the triple "e" formula. That is a chamber which is elected, equal and effective. There is no reason why a new chamber cannot be directly elected in its entirety, like the Australian Senate. There, a system of PR has brought independents and minority parties (such as the Greens) into the Federal Parliament. Indeed, they have often held the balance of power in the Senate. Moreover, an elected Senate has not detracted from the authority of House of Representatives, which remains primarily the house of government.

Equally, the new chamber should be composed of an equal number of representatives from the English regions and the Home Nations.

Finally, a new chamber must enjoy effective powers. In practice this means that, with the exception of money Bills, the Upper House should enjoy equal power with the Commons over all proposed laws. Vesting a power of veto in the Upper House is after all the *raison d'être* of bicameralism.

Yours etc,
RICHARD A. EDWARDS,
Law Faculty, Southampton Institute,
East Park Terrace,
Southampton SO14 0YN.
richard.edwards@solent.ac.uk
March 29.

From Mr Grant Woodruff

Sir, In his perspicacious article on reforming the second chamber, Peter Riddell writes that we have, in effect, a unicameral system. Checks and balances on the Commons are clearly needed but could they not better be provided without the burden of a contorted body such as a new House of Lords?

New Zealand has a unicameral system and any shortcomings identified there could be compensated for in some of our existing bodies. For example, the select committee structure could be further strengthened and we could give cer- tain tasks, such as a veto over the postponement of a general election, to the Privy Council.

Yours sincerely,
GRANT WOODRUFF,
Heatherlands, Naphill Common,
High Wycombe HP14 4RF.
grant.woodruff@btinternet.com
March 29.

Care of young offenders

From the Director of the Prison Reform Trust

Sir, Coincidentally, the Prison Reform Trust and the independent Inspectorate of Prisons were both established at the same time nearly 20 years ago, and I have therefore had the doubtful, and perhaps unique, privilege of reading every single report issued by successive chief inspectors. I can think of none which has revealed such impoverished treatment as that just issued by Sir David Ramsbotham on Feltham Young Offender Institution (report, March 26).

Feltham offers a Dickensian vision of filth and neglect, a corrupting establishment which seems to have been designed to confirm the criminality of the youngsters in its charge. With almost 1,000 places, it necessarily contains prisoners far from their homes and is quite unable to provide individual care and treatment.

The announcement that the Prison Service is seeking alternative accommodation for some of Feltham's young offenders, many of them little more than children, is welcome but does not go far enough. Looking after young delinquents should be no business of the Prison Service. Most domestic and international legislation now acknowledges that adulthood begins at the 18th birthday. Prisons should be subject to the same principle.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN SHAW,
Director,
Prison Reform Trust,
Second Floor,
15 Northburgh Street, EC1V 0JR.
March 26.

Speed traps

From Mr R. J. Butler

Sir, You do not normally give the addresses of organisations that encourage lawbreaking. Today you have done so by giving the Internet addresses of two organisations that arguably encourage motorists to give details of the location of speed cameras and by the publication of a registry of speed traps (report, March 24).

Yours sincerely,
R. J. BUTLER,
29 Villa Road,
Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4EU.
March 24.

Business letters, page 29

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Priorities for Commission reform

From Mr W. H. Henderson

Sir, Perhaps one of the first reforms of the European Commission (letters, March 17, 19, 20, 24 and 27) should be to abolish the title of President. The Commission is a bureaucracy operating under the aegis of the Council of Ministers. As such its top man should more appropriately be designated as Director-General, or even Chief Clerk.

This would reduce the risk of falling into the delusion, as Mr Santer seemed to do, that the office is in some way the Presidency of Europe, and would make it clear that the Commission is the servant of the people, not its master.

Yours truly,
W. H. HENDERSON,
Quarrey House,
Charlton Horethorne,
Sherborne, Dorset DT9 4NY.
March 29.

From Mrs Juliet Campbell

Sir, The British media have not been fair to Jacques Santer in their coverage of the Middelhoek Report and the Commission's subsequent resignation.

There are unreal assumptions about the power of the President of the Commission to bring to heel colleagues whom he does not appoint and cannot sack, and who have the backing of their respective governments. Nor can Jacques Santer's authority have been strengthened by the manner of his appointment, as a surprise fallback candidate after other nominations had been blocked by different member states.

Many, though not all, of the criticisms now being made have their origins in earlier periods. Most of the fraud regularly reported by the Court of Auditors has taken place within the jurisdiction of member states, not the Community institutions. Santer, who inherited a Commission characterised by cronyism and weak managerial structures, set himself on appointment the task of making the Commission more efficient and less corrupt, set up an internal anti-fraud unit, and established codes of conduct for commissioners and his staff. His main fault has been failure to change a long-established culture.

During my time in Luxembourg I came to know Prime Minister Santer, as he then was, quite well and to respect him. I am sorry that he should have become the latest victim of our media's thirst for a weekly scapegoat.

Yours faithfully,
JULIET CAMPBELL
(British Ambassador to
Luxembourg, 1988-91),
3 Belbroughton Road,
Oxford OX2 6UZ.
March 23.

From the Chairman of the UK Independence Party

Sir, The assertion by a Conservative Party spokesman (report, early editions, March 26) that a recent MORI poll on the European election, showing that this party could win 25 per cent of the vote, was "rigged" and "says nothing about elections" is both complacent and ludicrous.

The truth is that the UKIP says what many politicians secretly think and what a huge section of the British public wants — withdrawal from the EU.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL FARAGE,
Chairman,
UK Independence Party,
Triumph House,
189 Regent Street, W1R 7WF.
March 26.

Scottish ceremonial

From Mr John York

Sir, I am dismayed to read (report, March 19) that government ministers have advised that the opening of the Scottish parliament should be a "civic celebration for ordinary people, relatively free from pomp". What does this mean? This is, after all, a great state occasion and the best way for ordinary people to celebrate it would be to declare a national holiday in Scotland and allow the people to observe an expression of Scottish pride. The Queen *is* Queen of Scotland and there are many Scottish traditional aspects which could be displayed. The Lord Lyon King of Arms, the head of the independent Scottish heralds, could devise a truly magnificent piece of ceremonial suitable for the occasion, in the same way that the heralds in England under the Earl Marshal do.

Who said that ordinary people do not want a splash of colour and a grand occasion? I detect a number of agendas working behind the scene which are quite out of step with popular opinion.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN YORK,
26 Ashwell Avenue,
Camberley, Surrey GU15 2AR.
March 20.

Press awards

From Miss Carol Sarler

Sir, Writing as a judge of last week's press awards, Brian MacArthur (Media, March 26) asks whether it was "fair" to have pitched the losing tabloid critics Charles Catchpole of *The Mirror*, and Jaci Stephen of the *Daily Mail*, against "the wit" of *The Daily Telegraph*'s Charles Spencer, "the sustained cleverness" of *The Sunday Times*'s A. A. Gill or, heaven help us, "the high seriousness" of Blake Morrison in the *Independent on Sunday*.

Of course it was fair; it was just the judging that was not. Mr Catchpole and Miss Stephen should not have been assessed in a competition of erudition (let alone one of showing off). The only criterion the judges should have used was which of the nominees best served *their* particular, defined readership — for the greatest and truest critic is the one who proves himself to be first, and last, on *his* readers' side.

Nobody knew that better than the late Jack Tinker of the *Daily Mail* in whose name the award is given. Jack, as it happens, was a huge fan of both Catchpole and Stephen; if celestial votes were allowed, I'll wager the result would have been different.

Yours etc,
CAROL SARLER,
35 Upper Tollington Park, N4 3EJ.
March 26.

The best medicine

From Dr Andrew Severn

Sir, Our local Nuffield hospital recently asked the opinion of the nursing staff about the renaming of its two wards.

Local beauty spots and historic monuments were predictable choices, but the obvious winner in my view is the choice of one of the theatre nursing staff who suggested "Morecambe" and "Wise"

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW M. SEVERN,
Lane Head House,
Main Road, Bolton-le-Sands,
Lancashire LA5 8DN.
March 28.

Currency slide

From Mr R. F. Flint

Sir, When the euro eventually achieves parity with the dollar will it then be known as the douleur?

Yours sincerely,
RAY FLINT,
20 Hillside, SW19 4NL.
March 30.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 30: The Princess Royal, Colonel, The Blues and Royals, was received by The Queen upon her appointment as Gold Stick and received from Her Majesty the Stick of Office.

Mrs Christian Adams has succeeded The Lady Elton as Lady in Waiting to The Queen.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 30: The Duke of Edinburgh, Royal Governor, this morning visited Sutton's Hospital in Charterhouse, Charterhouse Square, London, EC1.

His Royal Highness, Honorary Life Member, today attended a Lunch at The Arts Club, 40 Dover Street, London, W1.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Honorary Fellow, this evening attended the Royal College of Radiologists' X Appeal concert and Dinner at St James's Palace.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 30: The Duke of York, Patron, inaugurated a new field ambulance for the Commonwealth Society for the Deaf at Buckingham Palace.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 30: The Prince Edward, Chairman, International Council, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, this morning held a meeting for the Congressional Award of the United States of America, at Buckingham Palace.

His Royal Highness, Trustee, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, today gave a lunch at Buckingham Palace.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 30: The Princess Royal, President, Animal Health Trust, this morning unveiled a sculpture of the racehorse Lord Gyllene, at Lanwades Park, Kentford, Newmarket, Suffolk and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk (The Lord Belstead).

Her Royal Highness this afternoon gave a Lunch for The Royal Veterinary College at Buckingham Palace.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 30: The Duke of Kent this morning formally opened the Scot-World 1999 Exhibition.

His Royal Highness then visited West of Scotland Science Park, Kelvin Campus, Maryhill Road, Glasgow.

The Duke of Kent afterwards visited Microlase Optical Systems at Unit 8, West of Scotland Science Park.

His Royal Highness subsequently visited Rhone Diagnostics Technologies Ltd, Unit 3.06, West of Scotland Science Park.

The Duke of Kent this afternoon attended a lunch at the Lord Provost's Office to meet representatives of The Glasgow Export Partnership and of Glasgow companies engaged in the export markets.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
RICHMOND PARK
March 30: Princess Alexandra this afternoon visited the General Dental Council at 37 Wimpole Street, London.

Her Royal Highness, Patron of the Central School of Speech and Drama, later received Mr Laurence Harbottle upon retiring as Chairman of the Governors and Mr Brian Goodban on assuming the appointment.

Princess Alexandra, Patron, subsequently received Sir John Hanson, Chairman of the Trustees of the British Skin Foundation.

Royal engagements

The Duke of Edinburgh, as patron and trustee, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, will attend receptions for young people who have reached the gold standard at St James's Palace at 11.30 and 4.00. Later, as patron, he will attend an Outward Bound Trust dinner at Buckingham Palace at 7.40.

The Prince of Wales will visit McLaren International, Albert Drive, Woking, at 10.30; will visit The Prince's Trust Youth Bus, Town Square, Woking, at 11.35, and Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, at 11.55; will visit Beacon Centre, Royal Surrey County Hospital, Guildford, at 1.15, and St Piers centre for children and young people with epilepsy, St Piers Lane, Lingfield, at 2.40; and as patron, Welsh National Opera, will attend a performance of *Hansel and Gretel* at Sadler's Wells Theatre, at 7.05.

Helen de Freitas

A memorial service for Helen de Freitas will be held on Saturday, May 15, at 11.00am, at the Wellington Avenue United Church of Christ, 615 W Wellington, Chicago 60657, USA. All enquiries 0171-435 0502.

Lecture

Leverhulme Memorial Lecture
Professor Sir Martin Rees, FRS, Astronomer Royal, yesterday delivered the Leverhulme Memorial Lecture entitled: "Our universe and others: 15 billion years of cosmic evolution" at the University of Liverpool. Professor Rees, the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Liverpool, and the Leverhulme Trustees attended a dinner held afterwards.

Institute of Biology

The following have been elected as Fellows and may use the designatory letters CBiol FIBiol:

Dr P R Beck-Samuels, Professor M R Dando, Professor R A Dwek, Mr D J Everett, Dr D J Gibson, Mr J A Green, Professor B M Greenwood, Dr B T Hill, Professor S T Holgate, Dr P E Holt, Professor M H Jackson, Professor D B Kell, Dr A R Leeds, Dr M D Lucock, Dr H A Robertson, Professor P J Schembri, Dr G B Shummield, Professor C M Thomas, Professor A P F Turner

Call 0171 581 8333 ext 230 for information on Fellowship.

Appointment

Mr Tony Smith has been appointed High Commissioner to Jamaica from July in succession to Mr Richard Thomas who will be retiring from the Diplomatic Service.



PAUL COUSANS

Philip Park, restoration project engineer, stands in front of the "Cathedral of the Industrial Revolution"

£3m grant to restore giant boat lift

By Russell Jenkins

THE Anderton Boat Lift, one of the Victorians' most magnificent and eccentric feats of industrial engineering, is to be restored to its original working order.

The iron structure raised or lowered barges by a complex hydraulic system to link the Trent and Mersey Canal with the River Weaver, near Northwich, in Cheshire, 50ft below.

When it was built in 1875 by Edwin Clark, it was the first of its kind anywhere in the world and revered as a testimony of the ingenuity and sheer daring of 19th-century engineers.

British Waterways, which describes the lift as a cathedral of the Industrial Revolution, yesterday announced a National Lottery grant of £3.3 million towards the £7 million restoration costs.

Derek Cochrane, British Waterways regional director, said: "There is no doubt that the Anderton Boat Lift is a monument of international significance. When built it was the biggest step in water transport since the building of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct 70 years earlier. Later boat lifts in Belgium and France copied Anderton but its design was never bettered."

To the observer the lift looks like an early North Sea oilrig rising from the riverbank. On the opposite bank the Brunner Mond chemical plant completes the industrial landscape.

In the last century, the canal carried coal barges from St Helens to the deep rocksalt mines in Northwich. Salt was then shipped by canal to Liverpool, Manchester and the world.

Although the river almost touches the canal, boatmen had to add another three to four days to their journey, travelling via the Manchester Ship Canal to reach the mines.

Clark devised an hydraulic lift fed by an aqueduct. Boats were loaded into water-filled caissons which were raised or lowered by a delicate balancing system. Water was pumped into the upper tank causing it to descend, pulling the lower tank up with it.

The system worked perfectly until 1908 when corrosion, caused by the oversalinated water, made it temperamental. Within weeks, the Weaver Navigation Trustees had devised and built an electrical system to take the strain: this Heath Robinsonesque system kept it going until 1983.

One canal enthusiast, who travelled on the lift before its closure, said: "It squeaked and creaked and water dropped on your head. Brown water, I might add."

Philip Park, the restoration project engineer, said that when they came to inspect the structure, they found that the electrical engine had disappeared but the cages for the workmen's ferrets were still there.

As he moves into the final design stage, Mr Park hopes to be able to restore almost all the original ironwork but the aqueduct will need 15,000 new rivets before taking a 70ft narrow boat.

He said: "I feel deep envy towards those who built the original lift because they took such a risk. It was highly entrepreneurial and one hell of a leap for the technology."

The first paying passengers in 1875 were charged one shilling for a laden barge plus a penny per ton. Pleasure boats will be charged £27.50 each when the project is completed in several years' time.

Toni Bennett, the funding manager, said that the £3.3 million grant was vital to secure the project. So far British Waterways, Vale Royal Borough Council, English Heritage and various businesses have contributed another £2.3 million, leaving £1 million to find.

Mike Cooksley, chairman of the Friends of Anderton Boat Lift, said that the restoration is a crucial first step to plans to attract tourists to the area that includes the Lion Salt Works and the picturesque village of Great Budworth.

LINKS

WEBSITES: British Waterways:
http://www.britishwaterways.co.uk
Northwich council:
http://www.northwich.com/anderton.htm

Church news

Next Archdeacon of Newark
The Rev Nigel Peyton, Vicar, Lambley (Southwell): to be the next Archdeacon of Newark in succession to Archdeacon David Hawtin.

Appointments
The Rev Paul Adamson, Team Vicar, North Tyne and Redesdale, and Worl Development Co-ordinator, and Rural Dean of Bellingham (Newcastle): to be Team Rector, same benefice.

The Rev Matthew Baynes, Vicar, Coseley Christ Church (Worcester): to be Rector, Bredon w. Bredon's Norton (same diocese).

The Rev Simon Chesters, Curate, Bidston (Chester): to be Priest-in-Charge, Runcorn Weston, and Director of Reader Training (same diocese).

The Rev John Chitham, CMS, Lebanon: to be Team Vicar, Worthing Christ the King with special responsibility for St Matthew (Chichester).

The Rev Alasdair Coles, Assistant Curate, Wymondham w. Spooner Row (Norwich): to be Minor Canon of St Paul's Cathedral (London).

The Rev Dr Jeffrey Cuttell, Writer and Broadcaster, Religious Programmes, BBC Radio Stoke: to be Rector, Astbury and Smallwood (Chester).

The Rev Audrey Elkington, Curate, Prudhoe (Newcastle): to be also Rural Dean of Corbridge (same diocese).

The Rev David Elkington, Priest-in-Charge, Prudoe (Newcastle): to be Vicar, same benefice.

The Rev Ian Forrester, Chaplain, Lancing College: to be Priest-in-Charge, Boxgrove (Chichester).

The Rev Phil Goodey, Curate, Hornchurch St Andrew (Chelmsford): has been appointed Priest-in-Charge, Wickham Market w. Pettistree St Peter and St Paul (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich).

The Rev Peter Graysmith, Team Vicar, Cannock with responsibility for Heath Hayes (Lichfield): to be Vicar, Rocester and Croxden w. Hollington (same diocese).

Canon Murray Haig, Priest-in-Charge, Alnwick St Michael and St Paul (Newcastle): has been appointed Vicar, same benefice.

Memorial service

Mr Adrian Ryan
A service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Mr Adrian Ryan, painter, writer and art teacher, was held yesterday at St James's, Piccadilly. The Rev Mary Robins officiated.

Mrs Scarlett Pears, daughter, read *Disobedience* by A.A. Milne, and Mr John Norris-Wood read *Afterwards* by Thomas Hardy. Mr Chris Kelly read from Adrian Ryan's *Painting in France*. Mr Guy Roddon, Mr Julian Machin and Miss Frances Fyfield paid tribute. Among others present were:

Mrs Adrian Ryan (widow), Mrs Geraldine Florio and Miss Vivienne Ryan (daughters), Mr Ben Hennessy (representing the President of the Association of Artists' Poseurs), other members of the family, friends, fellow artists and former students.

Airey Neave

The Speaker attended a service held yesterday in the Chapel of St Mary Undercroft, Palace of Westminster, to commemorate the life and work of Airey Neave, who died March 30, 1979. The Rev Robert Wright, Chaplain to the Speaker, officiated. Mr John Giffard, nephew, read the lesson and Mr Edward Webb, grandson, read *Out of Step in Unter den Linden*, from his grandfather's *Nuremberg*. Lord Mayhew of Twysden, QC, President of the Airey Neave Trust, gave an address. Baroness Thatcher, LG, OM, FRS and Sir Denis Thatcher, the Ambassador of the Republic of Ireland, the Leader of HM Opposition, members of the family, Members of both Houses of Parliament and members of the Airey Neave Trust were among those present.

Birthdays today

The Marquess of Ailesbury, 73; Professor Patrick Bateson, FRS, Provost, King's College, Cambridge, 61; Mr Richard Chamberlain, actor, 64; Mr Robbie Coltrane, actor and director, 49; Sir Roger Cork, former Lord Mayor of London, 52; Mr John Fowles, writer, 73; Sir John James, former Secretary and Keeper of the Records, Duchy of Cornwall, 64; Sir John Kemp-Welch, chairman, Stock Exchange, 63; Sir Paul Lever, diplomat, 55; Sir Pat Lowry, former chairman, Acas, 79; the Rev Sir Derek Pattinson, former secretary-general, General Synod of the Church of England, 69; the Right Rev John Roberts, former Abbot of Downside, 80; Mrs Daphne Robertson, Sheriff of Lothian and Borders at Edinburgh, 62; Lord Rollo, 56; the Earl of Rosslyn, 41; Professor Dame Sheila Sherlock, gastro-enterologist, 81; Sir Derek Spencer, QC, 63; Lord Steel of Aikwood, 61; Lord Trefgarne, 58; Professor Sir Frederick Warner, FRS, chemical engineer, 89; Mr Sidney Weighell, trade unionist, 77; Mr Nicholas Winterton, MP, 61.

Dinner

Foundation for Science and Technology
Lord Jenkin of Roding, Chairman of the Council of the Foundation for Science and Technology, presided at a dinner discussion held last night at the Royal Society. The Earl of Selborne, FRS, Professor Burton Richter and Professor Julia Goodfellow were the speakers.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr S.R. Clark and Miss C.S. Boyd
The engagement is announced between Simon, younger son of Mr and Mrs Rollo Clark, of Billericay, Essex, and Clare, daughter of Mr and Mrs Don Boyd, of Kensington, London.

Mr E. Cree and Miss A. Faulkner
The engagement is announced between Edward, younger son of Mr and Mrs David Cree, of Swainsthorpe, Norfolk, and Ailsa, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Derek Faulkner, of Weston Hills, Lincolnshire.

Mr O.C.C. Hunter and Miss N.L. Robins-Walker
The engagement is announced between Oliver Charles Cassels, elder son of Mr and Mrs Donald Hunter, of Hill House, Hampton Lucy, Warwick, and Nicola Louise, elder daughter of Mrs Sheila Walker and the late Mr John Robins, and stepdaughter of Mr John Walker, of Mendip View, Tarnock, Somerset.

Mr H.W. Jackson and Miss S-K. Cottam
The engagement is announced between Hugo, son of the late Peter Jackson and of Mrs Sarah Jackson, of County Tipperary, Ireland, and Sadie, daughter of Mr David Cottam, of Hong Kong, and Ms Isobella Bourgese, of New York.

Mr D.G. Stern and Miss P.H. Hamilton-Ely
The engagement is announced between David Stern, of Bednall, Staffordshire, and Penny Hamilton-Ely, of Fulham, London.

Anniversaries today

BIRTHS: René Descartes, philosopher, La Haye, France, 1596; John Harrison, horologist and inventor of the marine chronometer, Foulby, near Pontefract, 1693; Franz Joseph Haydn, composer, Rohrau, Austria, 1732; Nicolai Gogol, novelist and dramatist, Poltava, 1809; Edward Fitzgerald, translator of *The Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam, Bredfield, Suffolk, 1809; Robert Bunsen, chemist, Gottingen, Germany, 1811; John La Farge, mural painter, New York, 1835; Andrew Lang, writer and collector of folk tales, Selkirk, 1844; Rodney (Gypsy) Smith, evangelist, near Epping Forest, 1860; Arthur Griffith, Irish statesman, Dublin, 1872; Jack Johnson, boxing champion, Galveston, Texas, 1878.

DEATHS: John Donne, poet, Dean of St Paul's 1621-31, London, 1631; John Constable, painter, London, 1837; Charlotte Brontë, writer, Haworth, Yorkshire, 1855; Lady Charlotte Bury, novelist, London, 1861; John Pierpont Morgan, financier, Rome, 1913; Emil von Behring, bacteriologist, Nobel laureate 1901, Marburg, Germany, 1917; Medardo Rosso, sculptor, Milan, 1928; Jesse Owens, athlete, Tucson, Arizona, 1980.

Napoleon abdicated, 1814.

The Eiffel Tower was inaugurated, 1889.

The Church in Wales was disestablished, 1920.

The Norwegian explorer Thor Heyerdahl published an English translation of his account of the Kon-Tiki expedition, 1950.

PERSONAL COLUMN

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

TRADE; 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

But because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received. Isaiah 53.5 (GNB).

BIRTHS

BERRY - On 28th March, to Emma (née Tracey) and Chris, a son, Henry (Harry) William John, a brother for Oliver, Alice and George.

BRAMWELL - On March 26th, 1999 to Jessica (née Roberts) and David, a daughter, Alexandra Meg ('Ally'), a half sister for Katharine.

CORR - On March 24th at The Portland Hospital, to Sophie (née Hartnell) and Gavin, a daughter, Alicia Jemima Margaret.

FORGE - On March 22nd, to Iona and Oliver, a son.

GILL - On Friday 19th March 1999 at 12 o'clock to Karen and Martin, a son, Oliver Martin, a brother for Emily and Karis.

HACKING - On February 23rd 1999 to Emily (née Kinsey) and Stephen, twins Crispin Dominic Forbes and Cosima Ivy Augusta.

HARMAN - On Friday March 26th 1999, to Amanda (née Lockett) and Neill, a son, Marcus Jeffery, a brother for Jessica.

JOHNSON - On March 21st 1999 at Frimley Park Hospital, to Linda (née Neave) and Simon, a son, Zachariah Charles Bruce.

MAEDA - On March 22nd at The Portland Hospital, to Yoko (née Imuta) and Naoto, a son, Eisuke.

MEEKIN - On March 27th at The Chelsea and Westminster Hospital to Kate (née Alliott) and Will, a beautiful daughter, Alice.

PEZE - On March 24th at The Portland Hospital, to Valerie and Jerome, a son, Hector, a brother for Marguerite, Eugenie and Colombine.

RICHARD - On March 27th, to Jane (née Verran) and Martin, a son, George William, a brother for Thomas.

TIMBERLAKE - On March 25th, to Maria (née Watts) and Dominic, a daughter, Amelia Maria Ellen.

DEATHS

BARRETT - Colonel Christopher Malcolm OBE (late 5th and 7th Fusiliers and RRF) on March 29th at home aged 72 years from cancer. Beloved husband of Naomi and much loved father of Julia, Hugo, Rupert and Tessa and grandfather of Antonia, Victoria, Joss, Humphrey and Lottie. Funeral private. No flowers, if desired donations to The Royal Star and Garter Home, Richmond TW10 5BR.

BLANCH - William peacefully on March 28th at home aged 94 years. Former member of Levant Consular Service. Beloved father of Audrey, loved and admired by all who knew him. Funeral private, family flowers only please.

BOX - John Alexander peacefully on 27th March 1999 aged 85. Loved father of Avril, Christopher and families. Funeral on Thursday 8th April at Chilterns Crematorium, Amersham at 2.30pm. Enquiries to Arnold Funeral Service. 01753 891832.

BURY - Shirley Joan March 25th 1999 unexpectedly but peacefully. Wife of John Morley, much loved mother of Matthew and grandmother of Nathaniel and Benjamin. Funeral at St Pancras Cemetery Chapel, High Road, London N2 on 7th April at 2.00 pm. Flowers to CRS Funerals, 133 High Road, N2, or donations in memory of Shirley Bury to either Dr. Lipkin's Research on Jenner-Hoskin Ward (Cheques payable to special trustees for the Royal Free Hospital) Royal Free, Pond Street, NW3 2QG or to Metalwork Department, Victoria & Albert Museum, SW7 2RL.

CLARK - Jean Manson, RWS, NEAC, widow of Cosmo Clark, CBE, MC, RA, RWS, NEAC died on March 29th aged 96. Funeral Service at St Margarets Church, Shottisham, Suffolk at 2.30pm on April 7th. Lifelong painter and much loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

COLLIER - Geoffrey Stansfield on 15th March, aged 91 years in Somerset West, Western Cape Province, South Africa. Much loved and deeply mourned by sister Joy and nephews James and Alastair Millar.

CORRIGAN - Peter John, on March 26th at home. Much loved husband of Mary (née Gradwell) and father of Alice, Joe, Nick and Andrew, eldest son of Drs John and the late Cecelia Corrigan. Funeral at Ealing Abbey on 6th April 1999 at 2 pm. Flowers, or donations to RNLI c/o Christopher Wickenden FS, 71 Greenford Avenue, London W7 1LJ.

DUNKLEY - John L "Jack" on March 29th aged 82 years quietly in a Durban nursing home. Much loved husband of Elizabeth. Enquiries to C.H. Dunkley (01923) 490300.

DURIE of DURIE - Raymond Varley Dewar Durie of Durie, Lt. Col. late of A&SH, died peacefully 29th March in his 94th year and 62nd of marriage. Beloved husband of Wendy, greatly loved father of Diana, Andrew and Christian and grandfather of Nicola, James and Philip. After such a long innings will be much missed. Family only cremation. Thanksgiving Service St John's Pewsey, 12 o'clock, Thursday 8th April. No flowers, donations to British Heart Foundation, c/o F. Dewey Ltd., 26 River Street, Pewsey, Wilts. SN9 5DH.

FETTES - James Roland C.Eng MRAeS MIMechE on March 29th 1999. Dearly loved husband of Janet, devoted father of Jennifer and Linda, loving grandfather of Lydia, Timothy, Elizabeth and Joseph. Formerly at RARDE, Fort Halstead, Kent. Funeral Service at St Andrew's Church, Longton, Lancs. on Tuesday 6th April at 12.45pm, followed by committal at Preston Crematorium. All enquiries to N. Buckley, Skip Lane, Hutton, tel: (01772) 616362.

FOTHERGILL - On March 25th, Phyllis Mary, wife of the late Dr Eric Fothergill of Ambleside and mother of Peter, Elizabeth and Elaine. Funeral service at 2.00pm on Wednesday 7th April at Jesus Church, Troutbeck, Windermere, Cumbria.

GAYMER-DERHAM - Lt. Cdr. R.N. ret'd died at home on 28th March. Much loved husband of Joy, father of David, Jane and Robert, grandad of Robbie. Details of funeral E.J. Crossland 01705 580074.

GRANT - David Richard M.A. (Cantab). F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M. on the 25th March 1999. Beloved husband of Rosemary and loving father of Benedick and Tristan. The funeral will take place at Aldbury Parish Church (Hertfordshire) at 3.00pm on Saturday 3rd April. Enquiries and donations for Clare College, to G Hall & Sons, 75 Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. 01442 252395.

GUILFORD - Edward Francis, Earl of Guilford, on March 26th, peacefully in hospital. Much loved father of Piers. Funeral private. Thanksgiving Service will be held on April 26th at St Mary in the Castle, Dover at 12 noon. Enquiries (01304) 812300.

JARVIS - Irene Kathleen died peacefully on Monday 29th March. Funeral Service at St Peter's Church, Bexhill on Friday 9th April at 11.15 am, followed by cremation at Eastbourne. Enquiries to Mummery FD, Bexhill, (01424) 730418.

KETTLE - Major William Robert Archibald, M.C. Fondly known as Archie to family and friends, passed away suddenly at home on Monday, March 22nd. He will be sadly missed by family and his many friends. Funeral service at Exbourne Parish Church near Okehampton, Devon on Thursday, April 1st at 2pm, followed by cremation at Exeter & Devon Crematorium. No flowers, donations in his memory are for Exbourne Parish Church, which can be given at the service or sent to Maddaford Funeral Service, 9 East Street, Okehampton, EX20 1AS. Tel: 01837 52347.

LAKE - Louisa of Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire passed away peacefully on March 22nd aged 97. Loving wife of the late John, much loved mother, sister, grandmother and great-grandmother. She will be greatly missed by many relations and friends. Service at St Paul's Church, Langleybury on Tuesday April 6th, at 2.00pm.

LEWIS - On March 28th peacefully at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary, Linda Ann Lewis aged 48 years of Wooldale, near Holmfirth, Huddersfield. The dearly loved wife of Mark, loving mum of Alex and Adam, dear daughter of Joan and the late Ronnie and sister of Ian. Enquiries tel: (01484) 686939

LOTHIAN - With great sadness on 27th March 1999, the sudden death of Kenneth John William Lothian, Managing Director of John Scott Knitwear Ltd., Hawick, Scotland, much loved husband and lifelong friend of Audrey, very much loved and admired father of Deborah and Douglas and loving son to John and the late Elizabeth (Betty) Lothian. Rest in peace. Funeral private. No flowers. Donations in lieu if desired to Ward 1, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, Scotland.

MacMATH - Alastair Rowan died peacefully on Saturday March 27th 1999. Much loved Husband of Margaret née Newell (formerly of The Paragon, Newport, Essex). Father of Fiona. Cremation on April 1st in France. Donations to Cancer Bacup, and for further details, contact the Funeral Directors, Russell D. Green, 66B High Street, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB10 1EE, tel: 01799 513513.

MACPHAIL - Malcolm, March 27th 1999 (Felix or Mac to his friends), dear husband of Nettie, loving father of Euan and Aileen, caring grandfather and great-grandfather died after a short illness. Funeral service at Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead at 12 noon on Wednesday April 7th. Family flowers only please.

MAYER - Harold Charles, on 29th March 1999, aged 84, darling husband of Anne, loving father of Stephen and Colin, dear grandpa of Catherine, Josephine, Jeremy, Ruth and Hannah, and former Managing Director of Griffin and George. Funeral at Chilterns Crematorium, Amersham on Saturday 3rd April at 12.30 pm. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired, to The National Trust at Cliveden, Taplow, Maidenhead, Bucks LS6 OTA.

McKAY - On Sunday 28th March 1999, Major General Alex McKay CB, FEng, FRSE, FIMechE, FIEE, Mem ASME, late REME, formerly Secretary, Institution of Mechanical Engineers. Beloved husband of Betty and father of Andrew and Fiona. Funeral at St Swithun's Church, Martyr Worthy, near Winchester on Tuesday 6th April 1999 at 2pm. Family flowers only but donations to Marie Curie Cancer Care or The REME Benevolent Fund will be most appreciated and may be sent c/o Jno Steel and Son, Chesil House, Winchester SO23 0HU. Tel 01962 844044.

MIDDLETON - Kenneth Douglas died peacefully after a short illness on 28th March 1999. Beloved husband of Gwen, much loved father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral arrangements, Pargetter's, Coventry, (01203) 223343.

MILLBURN-FRYER - Peggy, beloved mother of Margaret, Jessica, Cherith and Paul and much adored Granny died peacefully at The Chorleywood Beaumont N.H. on March 29th. Thanksgiving service at Christ Church, Chorleywood, 12 noon on April 6th. No flowers. Donations to The Childrens Society.

MONCKTON - Sheila, aged 89, widow of Regis, of Stretton, mother of Alan and Daphne, grandmother and great-grandmother. Died peacefully at Amesbury on March 25th 1999. Cremation at Salisbury on April 1st, family only. Service of Thanksgiving at St John's Church, Stretton, Stafford on April 30th at 2.30 pm. No flowers please.

MOORE - On 28th March, aged 88, Joan Moore, after a full life of selfless devotion to her family, community and ideals, passed peacefully away at St Richard's Hospital, Chichester. Thanksgiving service at St James Parish Church, Birdham, Sussex on 6th April at 12 noon, followed by a private cremation. No flowers please. Donations, if desired, to King Edward VII Hospital for Officers, Fund Raising Office, 1 Bentinck Street, London W1M 5RN, tel: 0171 467 3920.

MURRAY BROWN - Ruth Mary (née Allsebrook) died peacefully in hospital on 29th March just before her 73rd birthday. Much loved mother to Louise and Angus and beloved grandmother to seven. Family flowers only. Funeral enquiries and donations to Cancer Research to John Blenkiron Funeral Directors, (01748) 850033.

NAGELSCHMIDT - Rose Elisabeth ARIBA. Died peacefully at home aged 90 on 29th March 1999. Funeral will be held on Tuesday 6th April at 12 noon at Golders Green Crematorium, Hoop Lane, London NW11. If preferred, instead of flowers, donations may be made to Nightingale House, Home for Aged Jews, (0181 673-3495) or to the Twentieth Century Society, (0171 250-3857).

PEAKE - Santa Maria (née Baroness von Henikstein), peacefully in Cheltenham on March 27th. Beloved wife of Edward Charles, and deeply loved mother of Henry, Robert, Marianna, Christina and Christopher, and grandmother of Lucy, Jonathan, Caroline, Francesca, James, Louisa and Serena. The funeral will take place on Thursday 8th April.

To place death notices, acknowledgements or notices please call 0171 680 6880

PIDGEON - Frank Bond enjoying life to the last, he died suddenly at home aged 81 on March 25th 1999. An honourable family man, faithful friend and true gentleman whose wit and humour will never be forgotten. Funeral and Thanksgiving at 2.00pm on Thursday 8th April at St James' Church, Ashurst, Steyning followed by cremation at Worthing Crematorium. No flowers please, but donations for The British Heart Foundation or Royal British Legion may be sent or given to Chalcraft Funeral Directors Ltd., Chequers Yard, Steyning, West Sussex BN44 3RE. Tel: 01903 812656.

PIKE - On 23rd March 1999, Air Commodore James Maitland Nicholson Pike CB DSO DFC, aged 83, whilst on holiday in Mauritius. Loving and dearly loved father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral Service at St Botolph's Church, Swyncombe, near Watlington, Oxfordshire on Friday 9th April 1999 at 12 noon. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to the RAF Benevolent Fund, 67 Portland Place, London W1N 4AR.

RITCHIE - Major Gerald M.C., The Green Howards, attached the Parachute Regiment during the war, in hospital on March 27th 1999 aged 85 years. Beloved husband of Elspeth and father to Elizabeth and Anthony. Grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral Service on Thursday 1st April 1999 at St Georges Church, Preshute, nr. Marlborough at 12 noon. No flowers please, but donations if desired for the British Diabetic Association may be sent to Thomas Free & Sons Ltd., The Parade, Marlborough, SN8 1NE, tel: 01672 512110.

SCANLAN - Sister Mary Peter CSA died peacefully on Sunday 28th March, aged 85. Funeral at St Thomas' Church, Magdalen Road, St Leonards-on-Sea on Thursday, 8th April at 11.45 am for 12.00. Further information from More House, 53 Cromwell Road, London SW7 2EH. 0171 584 2040.

SHOWELL - Cyril Leonard - 1913-1999. Passed away peacefully at the Manor Hospice on Saturday 27th March 1999 at Launceston, Tasmania, Australia. Loved husband of Doris Edna (Cass) and Emma May (dec.), father of Patrick, Peter, Noel and Christopher.

SLOAN - Norman Alexander QC died March 22nd aged 85. Dear husband of Beryl and father of Andrea, Derek and George. Family cremation took place on March 29th at Worthing.

STAFFORD - Phyllis Diana. On 27th March 1999, aged 84 years. Greatly loved wife of the late Widdrington Richard (Dick), dear mother of Veronica, David and Lavinia, and loving grandmother of seven grandchildren. Cremation private. Service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's Church, Woldingham, on Wednesday, 21st April at 12 noon. In lieu of flowers, donations if so wished to NSPCC, c/o B.C. Baker & Son, 15-17 High Street, Caterham CR3 5UE.

TINNER - Frances Mary aged 87 passed away peacefully on 27th March. Beloved sister and companion of Marjory and the late Thomas Sidney Tinner. She will be sadly missed by all her family and fondly remembered for her sharp mind and ready wit. Service to be held at Christ Church, Southgate, on April 1st at 3.15 pm.

VAREY - Professor John on March 28th 1999 peacefully in hospital. Much loved husband of Micky, father of Christopher, Nicholas, Alison and Michael and grandfather of Miguel and Daniel. Funeral Service at 2.30 pm on Wednesday 7th April at Golders Green Crematorium for family and friends. Family flowers only please. If desired send donations to Imperial Cancer Research Fund. Details of his memorial service to be announced.

WILSON - Peacefully on March 29th 1999, Dr. Alastair M.M. Wilson BA, BM, BCH, FRC Path. (formerly of Makerere, Ibadan and Edinburgh Universities), loving and beloved husband and dear companion for 50 years of Bunty (Barbara). Service at Mortonhall Crematorium Pentland Chapel, Edinburgh on Thursday April 1st at 3.15pm to which all friends are invited. Family flowers only please but donations may be sent to the Chest, Heart and Stroke Association, 65 North Castle Street, Edinburgh.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

CALVERT - The Chindit Association will be holding a Memorial Service for the life and times of Brigadier Michael Calvert DSO MA at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, London, on Thursday 6th May 1999, at 11 am. Tributes to the Chindit Benevolent Fund, and enquiries, to Chindit HQ, TAC Wolseley House, Fallings Park, Wolverhampton WV10 9QR.

OBITUARIES

CAPTAIN JEREMY ELWES

Captain Jeremy Elwes, former High Sheriff of Lincolnshire, died on February 22 aged 77. He was born on September 1, 1921.

JEREMY ELWES played a prominent part in the public life of Humberside and north Lincolnshire for half a century. A wartime member of the SAS known locally as "the Captain", he fought for so many causes and with such zeal that his family affectionately dubbed him "Don Quixote". But whereas Cervantes's knight tilted at windmills, Elwes fought to save them — along with other examples of his county's past. The Lincolnshire Arts and Heritage Association was among the organisations he helped to create, and he was a great advocate of local craftsmanship. He became High Sheriff of Lincolnshire in 1969 and a Deputy Lieutenant before becoming Vice-Lord-Lieutenant of Humberside in 1983.

The activities of the companies he founded ranged from vending machines to seaside marinas and air transport. Perhaps his bravest venture was Heavy Lift UK — which bought up the RAF's fleet of Belfast aircraft for transporting heavy equipment across the globe. The company (which was eventually sold to Cunard) leased the aircraft back to Whitehall for the Falklands conflict of 1981, in which at one stage Elwes offered to mediate.

His primary role in life, however, was that of farmer and landowner. He inherited two family estates, totalling more than 5,000 acres. At Elsham Hall he marked Conservation Year in 1970 by establishing a country and wildlife park — with tropical birds and a butterfly garden — and in 1983 it won a Henley Award for the conversion of an historic building. Elwes was proud, too, of his English Tourist Board tearoom certificate. Yet he had once aspired to be a diplomat.

Jeremy Gervase Geoffrey Philip Elwes had been born at Yeldersley Hall, his mother's home near Ashbourne, Derbyshire, the son of an actor who left the stage to found University Motors, and later still became a Catholic priest.

Jeremy went to Ampleforth before volunteering for the Lincolnshire Regiment in 1940. He was commissioned into the King's Royal Rifle Corps and served as an intelligence officer at El Alamein. He took great pride in having belonged to a team which led a German column astray by planting a doctored map in a burnt-out tank. He then volunteered for the SAS and, after a crash course in Serbo-Croat, was due to be dropped as an agent into Yugoslavia. But the operation was cancelled and he spent the rest of the war on intelligence and propaganda work around the Balkans. He was mentioned in dispatches after another deception exercise, in which an enemy ferry off Albania was fooled into mistaking a small launch for a British destroyer — and surrendered in consequence.

After the war Elwes was offered a Foreign Office post in Shanghai, but turned it down when he inherited the Lincolnshire estates. After a course at Moulton Agricultural College, he decided to settle down to life as a farmer in 1949. But he was not a man to settle. Soon two secretaries had to be employed to cope with his burgeoning interests — including Radio Humberside, setting up a chair of environmental medicine at Surrey University, working for the Conservatives and with the sick at Lourdes.

Among the charities dearest



to his heart in later years was the Shrievalty Association, which he helped to found in 1971. Its purpose is to preserve the ancient office of High Sheriff (then under threat) by endowing it with fresh responsibilities in each county, and to support law and order and the monarchy. As the organisation grew to number nearly 1,000 sheriffs of various kinds throughout the world, Elwes acquired a new sobriquet as "the sheriffs' shop steward". He stood down in 1992, a thousand years exactly after the establishment of the office of sheriff.

Not all his multifarious ideas flourished. One disappointment was his failure in 1980 to persuade the UN to hold an International Courtesy Year. Ruefully he admitted that some of his schemes were "hare-brained"... but friends prefer to say that he was ahead of his time.

Elwes, who painted for his own enjoyment, was a big man in all senses who never lost his enthusiasm — or his faith. He rarely missed the annual pilgrimage to Lourdes.

He is survived by his wife Clare — his Sancho Panza — and their four sons.

JOE WILLIAMS

Joe Williams, American jazz singer, was found dead in Las Vegas on March 29 aged 80. He was born on December 12, 1918.

A combination of visceral blues power and impeccable diction carried Joe Williams to a pre-eminent position among male jazz singers. A pivotal figure in the rebirth of the Count Basie legend in the 1950s, he was for ever associated with the hit version of the Memphis Slim classic *Every Day I Have the Blues*. Well into his seventies — his tall, imperious figure crowned by neatly trimmed grey hair — Williams could still be heard blasting out the song in his robust bass-baritone at festivals across the world. Yet his performances also revealed a less familiar talent as a mellifluous interpreter of ballads. Though he never attained the heart-throb status of Billie Eckstine, he was every bit as much at ease with romantic material.

Although his full-time stint with Basie lasted only from 1954 to 1961, Williams continued to work with the orchestra as a guest singer during the remainder of his career. Often described as the Count's "No 1 Son", he initially won him over by "sitting in" with the bandleader's small group at a Chicago club in 1950. Four years later, during another of Basie's visits to the city, Williams made another unscheduled appearance and was promptly signed up.

Williams, whose baptismal name was Joseph Goreed, was born in Cordele, Georgia. He was raised by his mother and grandmother and given the surname Williams when he was 16, more than a decade after his family had joined the great black exodus north to Chicago. He began singing in church and after dropping out of high school gained experience performing in a whites-only club, all the while absorbing the influences of vocalists as diverse as Ethel Waters and the young Perry Como.

In 1937 Williams joined the clarinettist Jimmie Noone, and later he made appearances with Coleman Hawkins and Andy Kirk. By his own account his career almost came to a premature end in the mid-1940s when he suffered a nervous breakdown and underwent electric shock treatment in hospital.

Casting around for a new direction, he took up selling cosmetics while taking occasional singing engagements. But after working with the visiting pianist George Shearing, Williams returned to music permanently, and soon afterwards he landed his first impromptu appearance with Basie.

The immediate postwar years had not been kind to Basie. Thanks in part to wartime entertainment taxes, big bands had become an economic burden; with the swing era slowly winding down, singers had moved into the limelight. At the start of the 1950s Basie had been reduced to running an octet.

By the time Williams became a permanent member, the pianist's fortunes had recovered enough to allow him to take a 16-piece line-up on the road. Williams, like the singer Jimmy Rushing before him, blended perfectly into the sleek formula of blues and pop standards. He had already enjoyed success with a version of *Every Day*, but the arrangement recorded with Basie in 1955 signalled a new phase in the long history of the orchestra.

The song was featured on the popular album *Count Basie Swings, Joe Williams Sings*. As Basie's fortunes rose, so did Williams. Though some critics complained that the new orchestra had lost some of the spontaneity of the prewar unit, its merits have since won greater recognition.

"We had our hits, but the main thing was, it was a very lifting experience being with that band," Williams later recalled in a profile by *The New Yorker*'s Whitney Balliett. "It was made up of men who took great pride in getting their music right. It was a matter of self-discipline and group discipline. If someone got out of line, we didn't go to Basie. We straightened him out ourselves. We were treated like artists, so we tried to act like artists. Basie was very quiet, but he observed a lot. In a way, he ran the band by letting it alone."

Williams struck out on his own in 1961. Along with Basie he had earlier found a niche at Roulette Records, whose notorious owner, Morris Levy, was renowned for his dubious accountancy techniques and alleged connections with organised crime. Looking back ruefully in a magazine article published earlier this year, Williams observed that Levy was, as he put it, "very creative": "I always managed to owe him £80,000."

Williams, who went on to record for a variety of major labels, was seldom short of work in the decades that followed. He made some acclaimed albums for Verve, including the disc *Live at Vine Street*, and his mid-Sixties work for RCA was reissued under the apt title *The Overwhelming Joe Williams*. The balladeer took precedence over the blues shouter in a guest appearance on Cleo Laine's 1994 album *Blue and Sentimental*. Williams's gossamer vocals on Irving Berlin's song *What'll I Do* were a match for any crooner's.

Having sung in a gospel quartet in his youth, he returned to his church roots late in life with a collection of spirituals entitled *Feel the Spirit*. By this time he had reached an entirely different audience through his role as Grandpa Al on the hugely popular television situation comedy *The Cosby Show*.

With his fourth wife, the English-born Jillean Milne, Williams settled in Las Vegas, finding time for rounds of golf between his many engagements. Apart from his widow, he leaves a son and a daughter.



Joe Williams on stage at the time of his tour of England with Count Basie in the late 1950s

XIAO QIAN

Xiao Qian, writer, died on February 11 aged 89. He was born on January 27, 1910.

XIAO QIAN was one of China's finest postwar literary talents: a man who was sent to labour camps by Chairman Mao for his dissenting views, and was later responsible for translating James Joyce's *Ulysses* into Mandarin. Yet before the dawn of Red China, "Hsiao Ch'ien" (the old spelling of his name in English, to which he reverted in the 1980s) was as well known in Britain as in China. Pilot Press and George Allen & Unwin printed four books of his short stories and essays in the 1940s, including *Spinners of Silk*, *Etchings of a Tormented Age*, and *China But Not Cathay*. His romantic eye for every ethnographic detail that made Old Peking great, the lyricism of his well-made prose, and his subtle empathy for the downtrodden (the stratum of his birth) in a society where poverty itself was shameful, established him as a cultural intermediary.

Xiao's stories are a permanent contribution to fiction about China, scarcely equalled by Chinese writers today. But he gave up fiction for journalism. Reporting on the Second World War in Europe for newspaper readers in China, he sought out the same kinds of human dignity that had moved him at home. He found them in London during the Blitz and among the Continent's weary survivors of 1945.

He originally came to England to study at Cambridge and could have had a safe career there as a Chinese teacher. Instead, welling up with patriotism after China "stood up" in 1949 against the same Anglo-American world he knew from the inside, he went home to serve the revolution. He enjoyed brief periods of useful service as a translator, but it soon emerged that his views were not in harmony with the new China. Many of his years were spent in internal exile, in labour camps for "Rightist" thought-offenders. Recording those travails, after Mao's death, became the final labour of his life.

With the thawing of the Cultural Revolution, Xiao devoted much of his time composing essays reflecting on his experiences: his apprenticeship at the *Dagong Daily*, before the paper turned communist; his old friendship and correspondence with E. M. Forster (and the shame of having burnt Forster's letters during the Cultural Revolution); canards about his days in England that he as a "Rightist" lost the opportunity to rebut; his love of Western literature and art, yet another offence; his sympathy with the people of London who had become enemies. These reflections were finally gathered together in the book *Traveller Without a Map*.

In his later career he helped to translate a number of works into Chinese, among them Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Herman Wouk's *The Winds of War* and the memoirs of Harold Macmillan.

In 1994 he and his wife, Wen Jieruo, together translated *Ulysses*. It was a thoroughly scholarly and workmanlike affair, with much of the hard graft undertaken by his wife, who worked from several Japanese translations. However, this did not stop charges of plagiarism emanating from another writer, Jin Di, who claimed that the work was too reliant on his own first-volume translation of 1988. This may have been a case of sour grapes, as Xiao's complete translation emerged before Jin Di's did, leaving Xiao with all the publicity and most of the credit.

His wife since 1954, Wen Jieruo, survives him, along with a daughter and two sons. The daughter of a previous marriage predeceased him.

GROUP CAPTAIN PETER JOHNSON

Group Captain Peter Johnson, DSO, OBE, DFC, AFC, wartime bomber pilot, died on February 12 aged 90. He was born on November 13, 1908.

A MUCH-DECORATED airman with vast experience of bombing operations over Germany, Peter Johnson came in later life to doubt the value of the strategic weapon of which he and his squadrons had been a part. His last book, *The Withered Garland*, published in 1995 when he was 87, was a graphic description of the life of aircrews in Bomber Command, but it also gave vent to some sceptical second thoughts about the effectiveness of the "area" offensive against German cities. Johnson came to the conclusion that the bombing had done little to destroy German war production or morale, and had diverted resources from the precision bombing of industrial targets.

Few senior officers, even retired ones, can have had the experience of having a book seen reviewed in the communist newspaper *Morning Star*. The paper gave ample coverage to an earlier book of Johnson's, *Neutrality: A Policy for Britain*, when it appeared in 1982. In that book he argued that Britain would be better off outside Nato, and should stop trying to act like a major power in world conflicts. He also felt that at that time the Soviet Union was no longer a threat and that Britain's close links with the United States were contrary to its own interests.

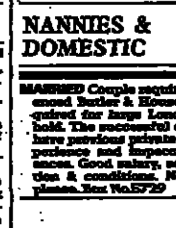
But although applauded by CND for these views, Johnson made it clear that he was not in the unilateral nuclear disarmament camp. He thought Britain might dispense with her submarine-launched intercontinental missiles, but was in favour of retaining battlefield nuclear weapons.

Peter Warren Johnson was the son of a Royal Navy captain who lost his life in *HMS Cressy* in the first major naval disaster of the First World War. He was one of 1,400 men who perished when three old cruisers, *Aboukir*, *Hogue* and *Cressy*, were sunk in the course of a few hours by a single submarine on September 21, 1914.

Peter Johnson, too, was destined for the Navy and went to Dartmouth, an experience which bred in him a rooted and lifelong dislike for the sea. Leaving Dartmouth, he had a short spell on the London Stock Exchange before going out to Australia to try his hand at sheep farming.

But he found his métier when he joined the RAF in 1930 on a short service commission. A natural pilot, he passed out top of his intake at the Central Flying School and saw prewar service — a wary watching brief over the Italian invasion of Abyssinia — in the Horn of Africa.

The first three years of his war were spent in Training Command (at over 30 he was thought to be too old for



operations) and he wrote the RAF's first syllabus for instrument-flying training. But in 1943, with aircrew losses mounting alarmingly, he transferred to Bomber Command and was given his first squadron, No 49. He won his DSO for his leadership during the RAF's heavy raid on the V2 test site at Peenemünde in August, and the following month was appointed station commander at Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire, where, in the early months of 1944, one of the squadrons under his care was the famous 617 (Dambusters), then commanded by Leonard Cheshire.

Subsequently he commanded a Pathfinder squadron in 5 Group. It was when he was sent to Germany by "Bomber" Harris to survey bomb damage at the end of the war that he began to have his doubts about the value of what had been done, but it was to be many more years before he set these down on paper.

In 1946 he retired from the RAF and joined the Ministry of Civil Aviation. From 1947 he was seconded to the Allied Control Commission, Germany, and for the next eight years was responsible for the development of civil aviation in the country. This involved him in requisitioning civil aircraft during the Berlin Airlift, and he was also instrumental in the resurrection of Lufthansa, Germany's national flag carrier. For this he was appointed OBE.

In retirement he remained mentally active, taking an economics degree at LSE and a degree in European history at the Open University. He was a regular contributor to *The New European* and wrote *The Hinge of Opportunity: A Security System for Europe*.

In his later years he became a trustee of the Dresden Trust in Britain, whose purpose is to raise money for the city's Frauenkirche. This magnificent domed church collapsed in the aftermath of the Dresden fire raid of February 13-14, 1945 (miraculously it had withstood the intense heat of the firestorm itself), and is being painstakingly rebuilt. Johnson had not flown on the Dresden raid himself, but regarded the British contribution to the German reconstruction effort as a civilised and conciliatory gesture.

He is survived by a son and daughter of his first marriage, to Joan Agnes Hare, which was dissolved. His second wife, Anne, died in 1987.

THE ABYSSINIAN EXPEDITION

FROM A CASUAL CONTRIBUTOR
CAMP BOOIAH, March 3

... THE road from Dolo to Booyah leads over the Afghool, a limestone ridge on the southern side of the Dolo river, and then descends sharply into the valley formed by the watercourse that runs close beside this camp. This valley like all the other valleys of this part of Abyssinia, has a deep black soil similar to that which is always found so favourable for the cultivation of cotton. At present these valleys are little tilled, but if capital were invested upon them and cotton grown, the country would soon grow rich...

The column made the march of about 13 miles easily, for here the road was good, and even the black soil level. Those who could obtain leave of absence did not march with the troops, but leaving them at the last halting place, Eikkullu or Haikkullu, turned to the right down the river of that name, and went to see the cathedral town of Chelikot. The road was steep and rocky, but the scenery amply repaid the toil of traversing it. The river for a mile flowed beside us, running clear as crystal over a bottom studded with many-coloured pebbles over which the water bubbled, sparkling brightly in the hot morning sun. About a quarter of a mile below Haikkullu the stream falls in a thin cascade, about 60ft. in height, into a gorge at the bottom of which it rolled in sluggishly under a dense canopy of reeds, rosebushes, myrtle and corinda. The green foliage of these formed a striking contrast to the bare and rugged limestone crags that rose high on either hand and which were devoid of all vegetation except occasional patches of tall dry grass. Down by the riverside, ferns and water plants sheltered in many a nook, and numerous acacias spread their slender boughs across the stream. These trees were thickly hung with bottle-shaped birds' nests.

Three miles below Haikkullu the ravine opens out into a valley, and the town of Chelikot, built on the sloping mountain sides, is reached. This place is far superior to any of the villages we have yet seen; the houses, instead of being contructed of mud and loose stones, are formed of neatly-squared masonry, held together by cement. None are of more than one storey; some are circular, some square, but all have raised roofs, thatched with the long grass which grows in the neighbouring parts of the valley. Every house has its garden, in which vegetables of many kinds are cultivated. The potato, the French bean, maize and peas could all be found in some or other of the carefully tended enclosures.

The town contains about 400 houses, the inhabitants of which turned out en masse to stare upon the strange white men, the Franks (as all Europeans are called), who had come from some unknown far-off land to join in battle with the Mighty Theodore. The men soon became quite friendly partly from curiosity, partly from a desire to possess some of those countless dollars of which popular rumour asserts that every Frank is possessed, and which a lucky fortune had directed to be scattered over Tigré...

ON THIS DAY

March 31, 1868

The Abyssinian Expedition was mounted not to add another country to the Empire but to free British subjects incarcerated by Emperor Theodore. Its task was successful. Magdala was captured and the prisoners freed during the next month.

THE TIMES TODAY

NEWS

Belgrade peace mission fails

■ The peace mission to Belgrade by Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Prime Minister, failed to produce a breakthrough last night to bring an end to the Serb aggression in Kosovo.

After six hours of talks between Mr Primakov and President Milosevic, the Yugoslav leader offered to start reducing his forces in Kosovo if Nato first stopped bombing. He also said ethnic Albanian refugees could return freely to their homes but demanded that Nato stopped backing the Kosovo Liberation Army.......................Reports, pages 1-7

'Cleansing' likened to Khmer Rouge

■ Thousands more Albanians flooded out of Kosovo as Nato accused Yugoslavia of waging a genocidal war comparable with the horrors of the Khmer Rouge and said that it had information that refugees trapped in a valley had been shelled by artillery and tanks.......................Page 3

Ulster peace accord 'on a knife edge'

■ Tony Blair and Northern Ireland's political leaders were locked in talks to save the Good Friday peace accord last night. Officials said the outcome rested "on a knife edge". The Prime Minister's spokesman said it was premature to talk of either breakthrough or failure, but time was running out.....Page 12

Test-tube mix-up

A white mother of test-tube twins, who gave birth to one white boy and one black after a mix-up at a fertility clinic, has decided to hand the black child to its biological parents.......................Page 9

Landmark ruling

Four alleged terrorists won a landmark ruling that paves the way for a host of legal challenges by defendants under the Human Rights Act 1998.............Page 10

Royal Train hired out

The Royal Train is to be hired out to Tony Blair and Ministers for departmental "away days" in a cost-cutting deal agreed between Buckingham Palace and the Government. In *Thomas the Tank Engine* terms, the Fat Controller will be John Prescott.............Page 10

Cruise comedy axed

Thomson Travel Group has announced that it is axing no fewer than 76 British comedy acts from its 1999 summer cruise programme because a survey shows that holidaymakers put comics at the bottom of their list of entertainment preferences.............Page 11

Teachers' pay anger

A moderate teachers' union threatened industrial action to derail the Government's plans for performance-related pay, despite David Blunkett's pleas to help to develop the scheme..........Page 12

Sport brainwashing

Linford Christie and Florence Joyner Griffith could have been side by side in the Olympic starting blocks if women had not been brainwashed by 19th-century medical myths, a study says. Hormone research this century is also blamed for making women believe that they are frail....Page 13

TV sex under fire

The preoccupation with sex on commercial television has come under fire from the networks' regulatory body. Channel 5's late-night "low-budget erotica" attracted particular criticism.....Page 15

Firms spurn euro

Almost two thirds of business leaders would oppose Britain joining the single European currency if a referendum was held today, according to a new ICM opinion poll.......................Page 16

Comic draws on the spirit of Blyton

The scantily clad, gun-toting heroes of futuristic comics are about to receive a challenge. The eldest daughter of Enid Blyton, author of wholesome tales for schoolchildren, is launching a children's magazine that aims to revive the spirit of her mother's books. *Blue Moon*, a fortnightly publication targeted at six to ten year olds, gives fairytales a 1990s twist.....Page 14



Alex Ferguson, who led Aberdeen to European Cup glory in 1983, was honoured yesterday with the freedom of the city. Ten thousand fans cheered the Manchester United manager as he emerged on the Town House balcony with the Lord Provost Margaret Farquhar

BUSINESS

Euro row: The European Commission increased pressure on the European Central Bank to cut rates but sparked a row with Germany over its growth figures.......Page 25

Rover deadline: BMW has given the Government four weeks to meet its demands for more than £180 million to secure the future of the Longbridge plant.......................Page 25

Sainsbury pay-off: Rosemary Thorne, the second woman to be appointed finance director of a FTSE 100 company, is in line for a pay-off of about £500,000 after deciding to leave J Sainsbury...............Page 25

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 11.2 to 6264.1. The pound fell .52 cents to $1.6136 and fell .50p to 66.69p against the euro. The pound index fell to 103.2 from 103.8.......Page 28

SPORT

Cricket: England's preparations for the World Cup suffered a first setback when Michael Atherton pulled out of the 15-man squad after another recurrence of his back problem.......................Page 48

Football: The celebrations over England's revival under Kevin Keegan may be put into proper context tonight when Sweden travel to Poland.......................Page 48

Boxing: Lennox Lewis can claim to be the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world when he receives a special award from his toughest critics, the Boxing Writers' Assocation of America.......Page 48

Simon Barnes: "After the tumultuous events of the weekend, there is only one conclusion to draw. Keegan must go".............Page 44

Healing power: On the 600th anniversary of the artist's birth, Richard Cork celebrates Rogier van der Weyden's *Last Judgment* — one of the great religious works...Page 33

Culture palaces: The West End won't lack excitement when the Royal Court moves out, thanks to a new scheme at the Ambassadors. Plus a tour round Robert Lepage's Quebec fun factory.......................Page 34

Ancient and modern: The theatre extension to Oxford's Magdalen College is a near-perfect blend of old and new styles, says Marcus Binney.......................Page 35

Pop gigs: In Atlanta Steve Earle proves that drugs and divorces do not diminished talent. Plus dEUS and Witness in London, and Ultrasound in Gloucester..........Page 36

Easy money: The high cost of credit and charge cards: how much you could save if you controlled your Imelda-like urges; beware the Isas of March.......................Page 17

Turtle target: A study suggests that the creatures use magnetic fields to map a 2,000km journey to nesting grounds in the Atlantic......Page 18

Press-up pressure: Magnus Linklater goes all out to impress his personal trainer..................Page 19

Divine inspiration: "We plump for St John's, with good reason. In matters social, sexual and doctrinal, it is arguably the most liberal church in the country." Joanna Coles goes to church.......................Page 19

Spring blooms: The property market is booming, thanks to cheaper mortgages and the prospect of lower interest rates...................Page 37

Fresh fields: Home-seekers are targeting the villages around Newbury, blighted for years by traffic gridlock.......................Page 39

Hillary Rodham Clinton had a good month. For one thing, she went to Cairo. For another, she said almost nothing about whether she will run for a New York Senate seat. All she had to do, it turns out, is let Rudolph Giuliani, her prospective opponent, be Rudolph Giuliani. It cost him more than 20 points in his approval rating.

The Washington Post

Preview: *Hunting Venus* (ITV, 9pm) sees an Eighties New Romantic group reforming for a television programme. **Review:** Joe Joseph on the architect behind the proposed extension to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London... Pages 46, 47

Feint and thrust

The best riposte to Slobodan Milosevic is to rehearse the strategic arguments steadily and clearly, while intensifying the air campaign. This time he has winked: next, he will blink.......................Page 21

Portillo for chairman

The Conservatives desperately need a Party Chairman with strong presentational skills and the managerial ability to impose some discipline on its sluggish review of policy. Michael Portillo would provide a boost to party morale......Page

Repent and revise

By acknowledging the unreliability of statistics, John Prescott has underscored the flaws of trying to predict and provide for new housing. Any congratulations, however, should be muted.................Page 21

PETER RIDDELL

Britain has a national interest in the stability of the Balkans and in preventing atrocities in Kosovo. But Tony Blair and other Nato leaders have failed to present a coherent and consistent explanation of either ends or means..............Pag

MICHAEL HOLROYD

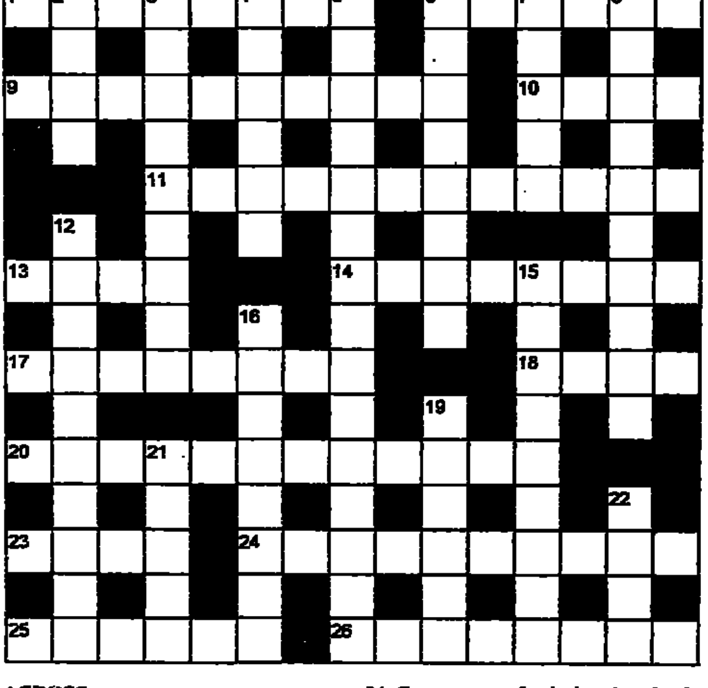
The truth is that biographers flatter themselves — after all, no one else will. They regard themselves as saints apparently because they are always thinking of others. Yet they are not greatly loved.........Page 20

ALYSON RUDD

There are physiological differences between the sexes but this matters only at the highest level, below that there are a multitude of shapes and sizes and mentalities of men and women, so let them run and jump and shoot together.............Page 20

Joe Williams, jazz singer; **Group Captain P.W. Johnson**, wartime bomber pilot; **Captain Jeremy Elwes**, former High Sheriff of Lincolnshire.......................Page 2

Kosovo refugees; House of Lords; EU Commissioners; Scottish ceremonial; young offenders....Page 21



TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ **FILMS**
James Christopher reviews Joan Plowright and Maggie Smith (left) in *Tea With Mussolini*, plus other new releases

■ **BOOKS**
Children's titles for Easter; Christina Odone on the phenomenon of Lourdes

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,065

ACROSS

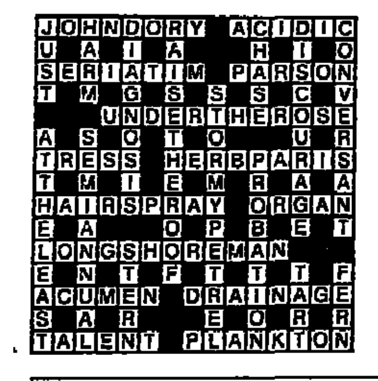
1 After rest, we fly around plant (8).
6 Alarm poison's sounded (6).
9 One seen in the garden who sits out? (10).
10 Onions? That's one of the things an expert knows (4).
11 Change to car repeated – it is by no means common (12).
13 Settle in the country (4).
14 What comes from a pot's stirred with one (8).
17 Weapon that might be mine (8).
18 Set the ball rolling in golf championship (4).
20 Mere theory a king or noble demolished (4-8).
23 Just two notes making up Portuguese song (4).
24 Composure of mimic taken back into theatrical group (10).
25 One works outside, being flexible (6).
26 Dissolve union in paper – it is in decline (8).

DOWN

2 Cattle left unwatered (4).
3 Old seat of learning, with doctor caught in some marital overindulgence (9).
4 It's clear I cooked cake (6).
5 Where knowledgable people have ears? Absolutely! (4,2,3,6).
6 Renegade tailor might, being thrifty (8).
7 Cold, cold air circulating around and around (5).
8 Awful periods in reformatory centre put inside like this (10).
12 In Western, everyone pulls everyone right across the floor (4-2-4).
15 His lunches are well-known, but fail with staff (9).
16 Action organised by a group works (8).
19 Food is around, furthermore, after five (6).
21 When climbing, nerd drops a coin (5).
22 In haste, try to cancel correction (4).

Times Two Crossword, page 48

Solution to Puzzle No 21,064



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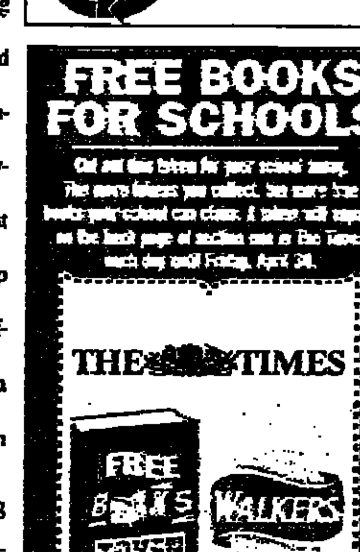
HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 6.39 am — Sun sets: 7.31 pm

Moon sets: 6.51 am — Moon rises: 7.02 pm

Full moon today

London 7.31 pm to 6.37 am
Bristol 7.41 pm to 6.47 am
Edinburgh 7.48 pm to 6.45 am
Manchester 7.42 pm to 6.44 am
Penzance 7.52 pm to 7.00 am



WEATHER

☐ **General:** southern parts of England and Wales will start cloudy with outbreaks of light rain. It will brighten this afternoon to be quite warm. North Wales and northern England will begin mainly dry and bright but rain will soon move up from the south. Northern Ireland will also have rain. After a mainly dry and sunny start, cloud will build across Scotland with rain spreading northwards this afternoon.

☐ **London, SE, Cent S, E England, E Anglia, W&E Midlands:** dull start with some light rain around, but warm sunshine this afternoon. Light SE wind. Max 18C (64F).

☐ **Channel Is, SW England, S Wales:** after a damp start some warm sunshine, but it will be breezy and mist and fog may linger along the coast. Fresh SE wind. Max 16C (61F).

☐ **N Wales, NW England, Lakes, IoM:** bright start, then outbreaks of rain. Moderate SE wind. Max 16C (61F).

☐ **Central N, NE England:** bright start but becoming cloudy with rain on hills later; moderate S to SE wind. Max 16C (61F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, Orkney, Shetland:** sunny morning, but rain spreads northwards. Moderate S to SE wind. Max 13C (55F).

☐ **SW, NE, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Cent Highlands, Argyll:** rain breaking out, some of it heavy. Moderate SE wind. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **N Ireland:** widespread rain, heavy in west, patchy in east. Freshening SE wind. Max 14C (57F).

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** breezy, mild but cloudy; some rain and coastal mist. Wind S, fresh. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **Outlook:** unseasonably warm tomorrow. The west will have some showers and parts of the east coast will have mist and drizzle. On Good Friday, some of the showers will transfer eastwards, but it will remain warm with sunny spells.



AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

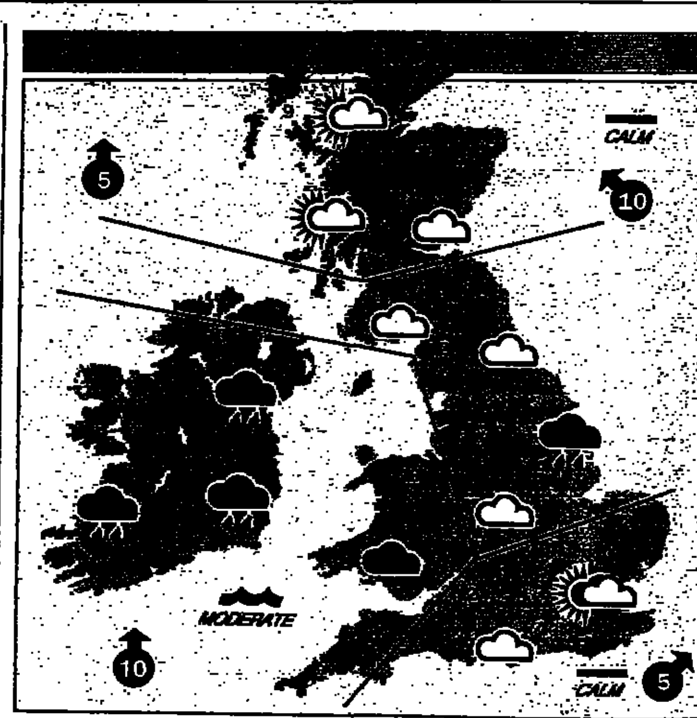
24 hrs to 5 pm. b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	10.5	0.02	14	57	s
Anglesey	7.2	0.01	12	54	s
Aspatria	9.7	-	13	55	s
Aviemore	7.2	0.39	11	52	sh
Belfast	8.7	0.01	14	57	s
Birmingham	3.5	0.01	13	55	sh
Bognor R	-	0.21	12	54	r
Bristol	1.9	0.06	13	55	r
Buxton	6.1	-	13	55	b
Cardiff	1.2	0.07	12	54	r
Clacton	1.0	0.18	9	48	du
Cleethorpes	2.3	0.02	15	59	s
Colwyn Bay	10.1	0.01	16	61	s
Cromer	1.1	0.01	14	57	c
Edinburgh	11.1	0.02	14	57	s
Eskdalemuir	6.2	0.01	11	52	s
Exmouth	1.5	0.19	10	50	r
Fishguard	7.3	0.01	13	55	s
Folkestone	-	0.38	11	52	r
Glasgow	9.0	0.01	13	55	s
Guernsey	0.1	0.30	15	59	d
Hastings	0.5	0.33	11	52	r
Hayling I	-	0.21	10	50	r
Herne Bay	0.2	0.03	13	55	c
Hove	0.3	X	11	52	r
Hunstanton	-	0.04	14	57	c
Isle of Man	10.5	-	11	52	s
Isle of Wight	X	0.22	11	52	r
Jersey	X	0.31	15	59	c
Kinloss	10.3	0.03	13	55	s
Leeds	7.4	-	15	59	s
Lerwick	9.0	0.01	9	48	sh
Leuchars	9.7	-	13	55	s
Littlehampton	-	0.28	11	52	d
London	-	0.03	13	55	c
Lowestoft	-	0.05	13	55	r
Manchester	7.6	-	15	59	b
Margate	-	0.19	13	55	r
Morecambe	9.1	0.01	12	54	s
Newcastle	9.5	-	15	59	s
Newquay	2.0	0.11	11	52	r
Norwich	0.3	0.04	14	57	c
Oxford	0.3	0.09	11	52	r
Penzance	-	0.11	11	52	r
Poole	-	0.12	12	54	sh
Ross on Wye	1.5	0.01	13	55	sh
Saunton Sands	4.4	0.01	12	54	h
Shrewsbury	4.6	0.01	14	57	b
Skegness	-	0.01	14	57	c
Southport	X	0.01	13	55	s
Swanage	-	0.14	11	52	r
Teignmouth	1.3	0.16	10	50	r
Tenby	5.6	-	12	54	b
Tiree	8.3	0.07	10	50	sh
Torquay	1.3	0.22	11	52	r
Weymouth	-	0.19	10	50	r

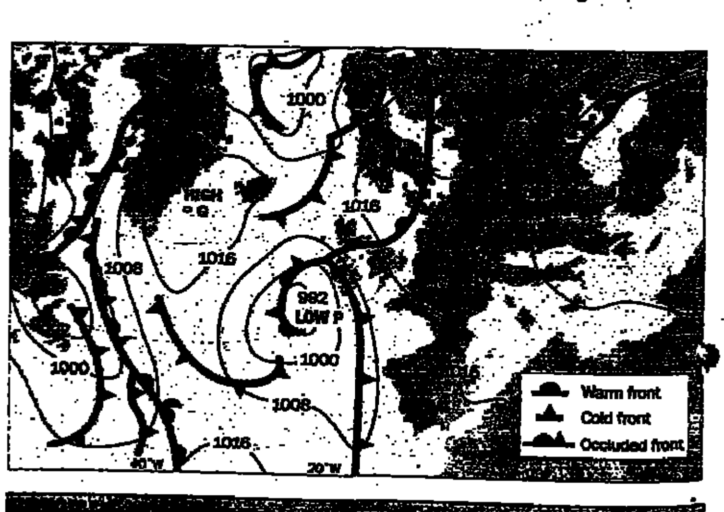
ABROAD

	C	F			C	F			C	F			C	F	
Ajaccio	13	55	f	Cologne	13	55	s	Madrid	15	59	s	Rome	14	57	f
Akrotiri	19	66	s	C'phagn	7	45	s	Majorca	18	64	s	Salzburg	5	41	f
Alex'dria	20	68	s	Corfu	16	61	f	Malaga	22	72	s	S Frisco	12	54	f
Algiers	16	61	f	Dublin	13	55	f	Malta	15	59	f	Santiago	25	77	s
Amst'dm	14	57	s	Dubrovnik	14	57	f	Melbourne	16	61	c	S Paulo	X		
Athens	18	64	f	Faro	17	63	s	Mexico C	21	70	s	Seoul	7	45	c
Bahrain	25	77	s	Florence	14	57	f	Miami	26	79	s	Singapore	25	77	t
Bangkok	25	77	c	Frankfurt	10	50	s	Milan	18	64	s	Stockholm	10	50	s
Barbados	29	84	f	Funchal	18	64	c	Montreal	11	52	s	Strasb'rg	9	48	c
Barcelona	16	61	s	Geneva	8	46	c	Moscow	12	54	s	Sydney	18	64	s
Beijing	8	46	f	Gibraltar	20	68	s	Munich	6	43	c	Tangier	17	63	f
Beirut	20	68	f	Helsinki	4	39	s	Nairobi	25	77	c	Tel Aviv	24	75	c
Belgrade	12	54	c	Hong K	19	66	r	Naples	14	57	f	Tenerife	21	70	c
Berlin	8	46	c	Innsbruck	8	46	c	N Delhi	32	90	s	Tokyo	10	50	s
Bermuda	21	70	f	Istanbul	11	52	f	N York	17	63	s	Toronto	13	55	f
Biarritz	15	59	s	Jeddah	33	93	s	Nice	16	61	f	Tunis	11	52	c
Bordeaux	15	59	f	Jo'burg	24	75	f	Oslo	3	37	c	Valencia	19	66	s
Brussels	14	57	s	L Palmas	20	68	f	Paris	15	59	s	Vanc'ver	5	41	f
Budapest	14	57	s	Le Touquet	14	57	f	Perth	26	94	s	Venice	15	59	f
B Aires	23	73	s	Lisbon	15	59	c	Prague	7	45	c	Vienna	9	48	f
Cairo	26	79	s	Locarno	X			Reykjavik	2	36	f	Warsaw	15	59	s
Cape Tn	33	91	s	L Angeles	19	66	s	Rhodes	18	64	f	Washton	20	68	s
Chicago	15	59	s	Luxembg	10	50	s	Rio de J	29	84	f	Wellington	23	73	f
Ch'church	26	82	X	Luxor	27	81	s	Riyadh	29	84	s	Zurich	8	46	c

Temperatures at midday local time Monday. X = not available



Changes to the chart below from noon: low P will be slow-moving and deepen initially before filling; high G will be slow-moving with little change in pressure



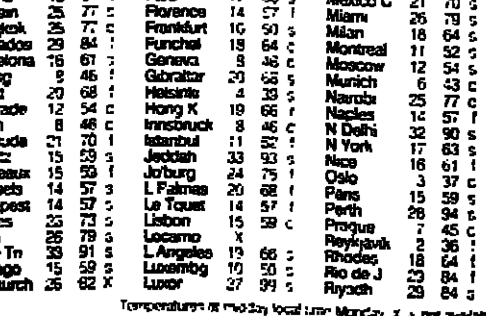
HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	1:04	4.1	13:12	4.2
Avonmouth	6:59	13.0	19:21	13.1
Belfast	10:47	3.5	23:18	3.2
Cardiff	6:45	12.1	19:07	12.1
Devonport	5:38	5.3	17:59	5.3
Dover	10:52	6.4	23:06	6.6
Dublin	11:30	4.2	23:45	3.9
Falmouth	5:09	5.1	17:30	5.1
Greenock	0:21	3.1	12:16	3.3
Harwich	11:43	3.9	23:57	3.8
Holyhead	10:07	5.5	22:27	5.4
Hull (Albert D)	6:07	8.3	18:13	8.6
Ilfracombe	5:45	9.0	18:04	9.0
King's Lynn	6:05	6.4	18:09	6.6
Leith	2:19	5.3	14:39	5.4
Liverpool	11:03	9.3	23:22	9.2
London Bridge	1:31	7.1	13:55	7.3
Lowestoft	9:31	2.4	21:22	2.5
Margate	-	-	12:11	4.6
Milford Haven	5:58	6.8	18:17	6.8
Newquay	4:50	6.8	17:08	6.8
Oban	5:30	3.8	17:55	3.8
Penzance	4:21	5.4	16:39	5.3
Portland	6:22	1.9	18:55	1.8
Portsmouth	10:57	4.4	23:19	4.5
Shoreham	11:00	6.0	23:22	6.2
Southampton	10:43	4.3	23:04	4.5
Swansea	6:06	12.3	18:24	12.2
Tees	3:27	9.7	15:37	9.9
Walton-On-Naze	11:38	4.1	23:51	4.1

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

Yesterday: highest day temp: Hawarden (Flintshire) 17C (63F); lowest day max: Sella Ness (Shetland), Lough Fea (Co Tyrone) 9C (48F); biggest rainfall: Tulloch Bridge (Highland) 0.50in; most sunshine: Edinburgh 11.1hr.

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هكذا من الأصل

Atherton out of World Cup
Sport, page 48

European Commission weighs in with reduced growth forecasts

ECB rate cut pressure grows

By Alasdair Murray
Economics Correspondent

THE European Commission yesterday increased pressure on the European Central Bank to cut interest rates but triggered a row with Germany over a sharp downgrade to the country's growth figures.

The Commission cuts its forecasts for euroland growth this year from 2.6 per cent to 2.2 per cent and also reduced its inflation predictions from 1.6 per cent to 1.2 per cent, suggesting that the ECB has room to cut rates without endangering its inflation target. In an accompanying economic policy recommendation, the Commission said it wanted European governments to ensure that "monetary policy has adequate room for manoeuvre in the light of prevailing conditions characterised by a considerable slack in the product and labour markets".

Yves-Thibault de Silguy, acting Monetary Affairs Commissioner, made it clear that the ECB would feel its hands were tied unless European countries maintained tight control of their budgets and kept the lid on wage inflation. The Commission singled out France, Germany, Italy and The Netherlands for budgetary criticism, forecasting that these countries would fail to hit their own targets this year. M de Silguy added, however, that the Commission did not regard new measures as necessary, rather that these countries must maintain an iron grip on their finances.

Germany also came under fire for its failure to trim industry subsidies, review its unemployment benefits system and speed up cuts to labour taxes.

The Commission also called on France to introduce its promised 35-hour week in a way that did not increase the overall cost of labour and promoted flexible working times.

However, it was the Commission's decision to reduce its forecast for German economic growth from 2.2 per cent to 1.7 per cent this year which prompted an official riposte from the German Government.

Werner Müller, German Economics Minister, described the Commission forecasts as "too defensive" and "too low". He insisted, however, that there was no "reason to overdramatise this" adding that in the second half of the year an improvement in the global economy would help to lift European growth.

The forecasts, however, had only a limited impact on the euro which yesterday rebounded off its recent lows on hopes that a solution could be found to the Kosovan crisis.

Traders said that comments from President Yeltsin and the visit of Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Prime Minister, to Belgrade has eased some of the market fears that Nato could become embroiled in a protracted conflict. The euro climbed against the dollar from about $1.07 overnight to reach $1.0765. The euro also made ground against the pound closing at 66.69p from 66.19p while sterling lost a further half cent against the dollar to close at $1.6136.

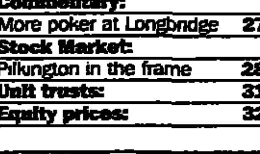
Analysts are, however, sceptical that the euro's respite will prove more than temporary pointing to the risks of an ECB interest rate cut and European policymakers' apparent indifference to the euro's depreciation.

M de Silguy yesterday stuck to the official European line that the euro's current weakness was a product of the unexpected strength in the American economy rather than any innate problem with the euro area economy and is "not a source of concern".

European stock markets also faltered yesterday as Wall Street retreated back below the 10,000 level ahead of the Federal Reserve Open Market Committee meeting.


LINKS
WEBSITE: www.ecb.int

Business Today





Change of image
The Hugo Boss chief who has designs on women
page 29

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6284.1	(+11.2)
Yield	2.47%	
FTSE All Share	2883.10	(+4.76)
Nikkei	15859.12	(-149.72)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9854.05	(-52.73)*
S&P Composite	1306.72	(-3.45)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	4¾%*	(4¾%)
Long bond	94[illegible]*	(94[illegible])
Yield	5.63%*	(5.65%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	5[illegible]%	(5¼%)
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	117.00	(116.76)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6120*	(1.6157)
London:		
$	1.6137	(1.6186)
€	1.4994	(1.5104)
SFr	1.3952	(2.4070)
Yen	194.34	(193.76)
£ index	103.2	(103.8)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.0733*	(1.0735)
SFr	1.4883*	(1.4847)
Yen	120.08*	(120.28)
$ index	108.9	(n/a)

Tokyo close Yen 120.02

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jun)	$14.65	($14.45)

GOLD

London close	$279.75	($280.95)

* denotes midday trading prices

Exchange rates .... Page 26

Sainsbury finance chief in £500,000 payoff

By Sarah Cunningham

ROSEMARY THORNE, only the second woman to be appointed finance director of a FTSE 100 company, is in line for a payoff of about £500,000 after the surprise announcement that she is to leave J Sainsbury, the supermarkets group.

The company said yesterday that Miss Thorne is leaving after seven years as finance director "to pursue other opportunities". She is likely to be replaced by an outsider. Analysts said that Sainsbury's is likely to look for a finance director with a higher City profile.

Another executive, David Clapham, the director of special business units and services, is also leaving the company, after 35 years' service. He is in line for a payoff of about £400,000. Mr Clapham will not be replaced.

A spokesman for the company said he was not aware of any plans for further high-level departures or redundancies at the group.

One City analyst said that Miss Thorne had had few direct dealings with investors: "Sir George Bull [Sainsbury's chairman] seems to have recognised the need to have a heavyweight FD on board, especially to handle the City. It is not her fault, but she has been part of a losing management team."

Another suggested that Miss Thorne had been keen to leave for some time: "She has not been able to make it a high-profile position. But Sainsbury's problems have not been problems with financial controls. It has been a problem with the number of beans available to count, not the bean counter."

MICHAEL KAPPELER/REUTERS



Joachim Milberg, chairman of BMW, said in Munich yesterday that the long debate over the future of Rover has harmed the German carmaker's image

BMW issues four-week ultimatum on Rover aid

By Sigrid Aufterbeck in Munich and Adam Jones

BMW has given the Government four weeks to meet its demands for more than £180 million of state money to secure the future of the Rover car factory at Longbridge.

If the UK cannot strike a satisfactory deal in that period, BMW will accelerate talks to build a replacement for the Rover 200 and 400 in Hungary instead of Longbridge, in Birmingham, a move that could threaten 50,000 jobs in the West Midlands.

Werner Sämann, who became chairman of Rover in January, admitted that BMW has not yet looked at particular locations in Hungary, nor had it applied for funding from the Hungarian Government.

However, he said: "We need to come to a solution fast, as we must go on planning our production. We need a decision from the UK Government within four weeks."

A BMW statement said the longer the talks dragged on, the greater the chance of investment going abroad.

The UK Government is understood to have offered BMW a package worth £118 million, linked with reciprocal investment and productivity and training improvements, to build the new car at Longbridge.

Yesterday, Joachim Milberg, the new BMW chairman, told reporters that the long debate over Rover has harmed BMW's image.

When asked if BMW is gambling over "peanuts", he said: "It is not the remaining millions we are gambling over. It is the whole package: training, work flexibility, and so on. In Hungary, we could have a plant running seven days a week and 24 hours a day. The fact that wages are also 30 per cent lower there comes on top of that."

Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, said he would meet Professor Milberg in the next few days and repeated that he is confident of agreement.

Professor Sämann said a voluntary redundancy programme last year was much more popular than he expected. Provisions of DM600 million (£200 million) were made for redundancy costs in 1998.

Whatever happens with Longbridge, BMW will keep Rover on a tighter leash. Key decisions will be moved to BMW management, and the Rover board will be reduced. Exchanges of BMW and Rover executives will be increased. There are currently 40 managers travelling between Munich and the UK.

Closer co-operation between BMW and Rover, on sales and marketing, should save up to DM1 billion in the medium term, BMW said. Rover lost £645 million last year.

Enterprise and Lasmo abandon merger

By Carl Mortished
International Business Editor

ENTERPRISE OIL and Lasmo have abandoned merger talks, ending hopes that Britain's top two oil explorers could put aside their differences and create a group with a market value exceeding £3 billion.

The breakdown of discussions was signalled with a joint statement by Enterprise and Lasmo: "Both companies have concluded that they are better placed to add value independently."

Despite 12 weeks of talks it is likely that key issues relating to the board and how the merged company would be run remained unresolved. The recent rise in oil prices may have removed the pressure to merge.

Joe Darby, chief executive of Lasmo, said that it became clear early on that cost-savings were not enough to justify a merger. "We identified £20 million in overhead savings. The value to be created was just not compelling."

Mr Darby said that the talks never got down to price. Insiders suggest there was a culture clash between Enterprise's technologically-led approach and Lasmo's wheeling and dealing in politically risky countries.

The residue of friction between the two companies from the acrimonious and failed bid for Lasmo in 1995 may have been too much to overcome.

Pierre Jungels, chief executive of Enterprise, said the package failed to appeal. "When you buy a house, there are things you like and don't like. The house may be beautiful but there may be a pig farm next door."

Second US banker for Barclays

By Caroline Merrell

MIKE O'NEILL, the new chief executive of Barclays, has brought in a fellow American banker to head up the bank's wealth management division, after the sudden departure of Steve Furness, who had been at the bank for 27 years.

Mr Furness, currently acting managing director of wealth management, is to leave the company by "mutual consent". He had previously been head of Barclays Life.

He will be replaced by Robert Hunter, currently president of Standard & Poor's Financial Information Services in New York. Before that Mr Hunter was a senior vice-president of Chase Manhattan Bank.

Mr Hunter will report directly to John Varley, chief executive retail financial services. The Barclays wealth management division employs about 12,000 people.

A spokesman for Barclays yesterday refused to comment on Mr Furness's compensation, but said: "We are delighted that Mr Hunter is joining."

MoD's wealth unveiled

By Alasdair Murray

THE "real" annual budget of the Ministry of Defence is about a quarter larger than currently shown in public accounts, the Government is expected to say later this year.

The MoD will also disclose that it owns net assets worth between £75 billion and £80 billion, with its fighting equipment alone valued at nearly £30 billion. The figures are far below original estimates of about £200 billion but confirm the MoD as one of Britain's richest institutions.

It receives an annual cash budget of £22.25 billion. However, the department will shortly publish its first balance sheet using a new accountancy system that is likely to show that the annual budget is in reality between £27 billion and £28 billion.

The findings result from the Government's move from a traditional cash basis accountancy system to a resource-based system similar to those employed in the private sector.

The conversion of the MoD to the new system of accountancy, codenamed "Project Capital", is the largest single accountancy reform undertaken in this country. The task has been complicated not only by the huge scale of the department's asset base, but also by the difficulties in calculating writedown and depreciation costs for military hardware. The MoD is still wrangling with the accountants, for instance, over its nuclear liabilities, which are estimated at anything between £10 billion and £15 billion.

The MoD has been trying to shed its reputation for poor financial management. It has even posted accountants with troops on active service to improve financial management, but it emphasises that accountants will never be allowed to run a war.

Commentary, page 27

Man U profits offside

By Paul Armstrong

SUCCESS is coming at a price for Manchester United fans with the club revealing yesterday that it will charge an extra £2 a ticket next season to help to fund its players' soaring wages.

This is a rise of up to 14 per cent for season ticket holders, who will now pay between £16 and £22 for each game at Old Trafford.

David Gill, United's finance director, defended the increase on the grounds that it would make the club's tickets only the ninth most expensive in the Premier League. Mr Gill said that this ranking excluded the price rises to be announced by rival clubs for next season.

He rejected suggestions that United's fans were being disadvantaged to the benefit of its shareholders, who were told yesterday that their interim dividend would rise by 5.8 per cent to 0.55p a share despite a fall in the club's earnings.

United's pre-tax profit slumped 28 per cent to £11.1 million for the six months to January 31 after incurring a series of one-off expenses.

Operating profit before exceptionals and player trading rose 6 per cent to £17.3 million after a 9.6 per cent increase in turnover to £56.5 million. Operating expenses leapt 27 per cent, more than half of which stemmed from an increase in players' wages, particularly the summer signings of Jaap Stam, Jesper Blomqvist and Dwight Yorke.

Stephen Byers, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, is expected to rule early next month on whether the recommended takeover bid from BSkyB can proceed. BSkyB, which is 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of The Times, has bid 240p a share for United, in which it has already built up an 11.2 per cent stake.

Bank of Scotland and Royal Bank launch joint venture

By Caroline Merrell
Banking Correspondent

ROYAL BANK of Scotland and Bank of Scotland are preparing to launch their first joint venture company, Caledonian Capital, which will provide acquisition finance.

The banks, however, yesterday denied that the joint company was a prelude to a merger between them. Both have been the target of merger speculation. North of the border each bank holds a 35 per cent share of the market.

A spokesman for Royal Bank said of the joint venture: "Although we will be broadly based in the UK, we will operate across Europe. We already have operations in Europe and have been involved in buyouts and deals there. We are both essentially dominant in the small to medium-sized market. We want to move up the scale." Of the merger speculation he added: "It would not make any sense."

The new company will provide equity finance for deals of between £100 million and £400 million. The market for acquisition finance of this size is dominated by the bigger investment banks such as Goldman Sachs and Deutsche Bank.

David Giffin, Bank of Scotland's managing director of structured finance, said the new venture would target companies with market capitalisations of more than £150 million.

He said that the two banks had decided to pool their resources as this would allow them to lend larger amounts of money. "Neither bank alone had the scale of undwriting that would be needed in this type of market."

Both already offer acquisition finance on a smaller scale. According to *Acquisitions Monthly* magazine, Royal Bank of Scotland is third in the league table of providing acquisition finance in the UK.

In 1998, it lent £755 million on 38 UK transactions, while Bank of Scotland provided a total of £679 million in 84 transactions.

Mr Giffin said that the company would offer finance at a rate 2 per cent above Libor. He said that it would attempt to compete on the terms and conditions attached to the debt.

Royal Bank of Scotland has recently been the subject of increased merger speculation. Earlier this year, it was revealed that Barclays had rebuffed an approach from the bank in the wake of the departure of Martin Taylor, Barclays' former chief executive.

Bank of Scotland recently announced a joint venture, which is proving controversial, with the American evangelist Pat Robertson. The bank is to provide a credit card through Mr Robertson's religious TV channel in the United States.

Rate cuts boosting house prices

House prices rose significantly this month, fuelled by a return of confidence to the property market as the effect of the recent series of mortgage rate cuts start to filter through.

According to figures released yesterday by Nationwide Building Society, average house prices rose by 1.5 per cent in March, up 7.6 per cent on last year. The average price of a house is now £68,308.

Although spring usually marks an upturn in the housing market, this month's price rise is a strong improvement over February, which recorded only a 0.1 per cent monthly increase, raising fears of a slide in the housing market.

David Parry, divisional director at Nationwide, said: "Estate agents and surveyors have reported an upturn in activity in the last couple of months and even house sales, which had been falling for the majority of last year, appear to have recovered."

However, Nationwide gave warning that a slowdown in the economy may knock confidence in the housing market later in the year.

Oliver limits loss

THE Oliver Group has stemmed the flow of red ink from its chain of shoe stores, limiting its loss to £107,000 in the year to January 30, compared with a £2.16 million deficit previously. Denis Cassidy, chairman, said this was because of better product ranges, tighter cost control and store redevelopment. He said Oliver recorded like-for-like sales growth of 5.7 per cent.

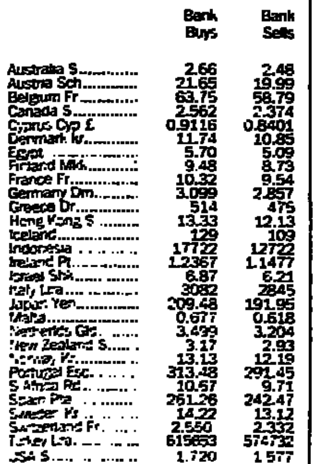
NTL service

NTL, the cable television company, has announced the launch of what it claims is the UK's first interactive television service. The service will be available from today via an NTL TV-Internet set-top box. There will be a wide range of home shopping, news, sport, travel and local information.

CAT in $70m deal

Cambridge Antibody Technology has secured a $70 million (£43 million) drug development deal with Wyeth-Ayerst, part of American Home Products, the world's seventh largest pharmaceuticals group. CAT shares rose 4½p to 246p.

EXCHANGE RATES



	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.66	2.48
Austria Sch	21.65	19.99
Belgium Fr	63.75	58.79
Canada $	2.562	2.374
Cyprus Cyp £	0.9116	0.8401
Denmark Kr	11.74	10.85
Egypt	5.70	5.09
Finland Mk	9.48	8.73
France Fr	10.32	9.54
Germany Dm	3.099	2.857
Greece Dr	514	475
Hong Kong $	13.33	12.13
Iceland	129	109
Indonesia	17722	12722
Ireland Pt	1.2367	1.1477
Israel Shk	6.87	6.21
Italy Lira	3082	2845
Japan Yen	209.48	191.95
Malta	0.677	0.618
Netherlands Gld	3.499	3.204
New Zealand $	3.17	2.93
Norway Kr	13.13	12.19
Portugal Esc	313.48	291.45
S Africa Rd	10.57	9.71
Spain Pta	261.26	242.47
Sweden Kr	14.22	13.12
Switzerland Fr	2.550	2.332
Turkey Lira	615653	574732
USA $	1.720	1.577

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Selfridges unveils hotel plan as store sales bounce back

By Sarah Cunningham

SELFRIDGES plans to redevelop the hotel attached to its Central London department store and is in talks with seven possible partners.

The lease held by Thistle hotels runs out in June next year. Thistle is among the hotel groups now talking to Selfridges about redevelopment plans. Vittorio Radice, chief executive, said that the current 294 rooms will be enlarged and more added, taking the total to between 310 and 320. Planning permission to extend the hotel is already in place, and Selfridges also intends significantly to improve the facilities.

"At the moment it is four star minus minus, we want it to be four star plus plus," Mr Radice said. The company is also looking at a range of options for how to use unwanted office and warehouse space within the store.

He reported that the flagship store's sales have bounced in recent weeks. In February and March they were 13 per cent higher than a year ago at Oxford Street, equal to 6 per cent, taking into account the 7 per cent space that has been reopened after refurbishment.

The Manchester store has traded at the expected level, contributing £400,000 in the first 20 weeks of trading.

Alun Cathcart, chairman, said: "While it is too early to predict the outcome for the year, the strong start from Oxford Street and encouraging signs from Manchester give us confidence for the future." The shares rose 7p to close at 249p.

Pre-tax profit in the year to January 30 fell from £15.3 million to £13.9 million on turnover that rose from £296.9 million to £307.4 million. On earnings per share of 14.3p (10.4p) the company is paying a final dividend of 3.2p, giving a total for the year of 4.8p (4.5p).

ANTHONY UPTON

Vittorio Radice, left, and Peter Williams, finance director, want upgrade in Central London

Al Capone law urged in Internet crime fight

By Chris Ayres

COMPUTER experts will tomorrow tell the Government that it should introduce an "Al Capone" law to tackle criminals on the Internet without damaging the future of electronic commerce.

The proposal, by Zergo, the UK company specialising in Internet security, is one of several to be proposed to the Government tomorrow after three weeks of frantic negotiations between business and Whitehall. Talks started after the business lobby objected to the Government's original proposals to tighten security on the Internet, which involved giving police access to private, encrypted computer files.

An "Al Capone" law would allow the police to prosecute suspected criminals — in particular paedophiles and drug smugglers — if they refused to unscramble information held on their computers. At present, police can seize computers, but they often cannot read material stored on them because it has been scrambled using high-tech software. The proposed law has been likened to the prosecution of Al Capone, the 1920s Chicago mobster, who was jailed for tax evasion after police failed to link him to other crimes.

It is understood that the Cabinet Office taskforce set up by Tony Blair to examine the issue of security on the Internet — made up of officials from the Home Office, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the security forces — has reacted favourably to the idea of an "Al Capone" law. However, a Government source last night said: "It solves part of the problem, but it certainly doesn't help if you're trying to monitor information without alerting a suspect."

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Rathbone Brothers profits rise by 40%

PROFITS at Rathbone Brothers, the investment management group, rose by nearly 40 per cent last year to reach £18 million, boosted by acquisitions. The growth in profits was helped by the incorporation in to the group of two private client businesses in Scotland. Rathbones bought Edinburgh-based Albyn Investments, and the private client division of Friends Ivory & Sime, also based in Edinburgh. As well as the Scottish acquisitions, Rathbones, which specialises in offering offshore fund management services to high net worth individuals, also bought Curzon, a trust and company administration business based in Jersey.

Michael Ingall, the Rathbone Brothers chairman, said: "As a result of the acquisiton of Curzon, Rathbone's trust division grew by more than a third and the overall profits in the trust division increased by more than a half." Rathbone now has more than £4 billion of funds under management. Mr Ingall claimed that the improved results came from Rathbone's policy of concentrating on discretionary investment management for private individuals. Earnings per share increased by 27 per cent to 39.55p. The group's total dividend payout was raised by 36 per cent to 19p.

EU clears BT venture

BT AND AT&T yesterday welcomed European Commission clearance for its $10 billion (£6 billion) global joint venture. No conditions were imposed on BT to gain approval but AT&T has agreed to sell ACC UK, its British long-distance calls subsidiary, to protect competition in the British telecoms market and between Britain and the US. AT&T has agreed to provide "greater structural separation" with Telewest, the British cable operator. The deal now requires the approval of the US Department of Justice and the Federal Communications Commission.

Roche confident

ROCHE, the Swiss pharmaceuticals group considered to be a potential merger partner for Glaxo Wellcome, yesterday insisted that it had the products and the financial strength to prosper on its own. For the first time, Roche's annual report provided a divisional profits breakdown, showing that pharmaceuticals contributed operating profits of SwFr3 billion (£1.26 billion) out of a group total of SwFr4.35 billion last year. The group's underlying earnings, before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation, rose 27 per cent to SwFr6.4 billion last year.

Waterfall raises stakes

WATERFALL Holdings, the snooker and ten-pin bowling group stalking European Leisure, is to make a direct approach to its rival's biggest shareholders with a view to launching a hostile takeover. The board of European — which has a 24 per cent stake in Waterfall — has already recommended an all-paper offer from Allied Leisure, the bowling-to-Burger King group, which values European at 83p per share. Waterfall aims to persuade institutional shareholders to reject Allied's offer, and back its own all-paper offer, likely to be pitched at 110p a share.

Standard's Isa success

STANDARD LIFE BANK yesterday disclosed that it is receiving 1,000 requests a week to open its cash individual savings account (Isa) even though the new investment will not be launched for another week. Isas will be replacing Peps and Tessas as tax-free investments next Tuesday. The bank attributed its success to its pooling facility, which allows savers to combine their deposits with their friends' deposits to achieve a higher rate. Standard Life pays up to 5.75 per cent on pools of £50,000 or more.

Tabloid wars on Net

BRITAIN'S tabloid newspaper wars are about to spill over onto the Internet after both *The Sun* and *The Mirror* announced reader offers with free Internet access, complete with e-mail capability. *The Sun*, owned by News International, owner of *The Times*, was first off the blocks yesterday with a special "free Internet for all" promotion and the launch of currant bun.com. The Mirror Group said it had created a new division, Mirror New Media, to be run by David Clarke who is joining from Virgin Net. Its Internet service will be available from the end of next month.

Tie-up on Tyneside

TWO Tyneside building societies, Mercantile and Standard, are to merge later this year, subject to the agreement of members. Mercantile Building Society is to apply to the Building Societies' Commission to proceed with the merger by consent of the board. The proposed merger will see Standard's business and entire staff transferred to Mercantile. Customers cannot expect a substantial windfall payment, however. Standard has proposed to make a bonus payment of no more than 1 per cent of the total of shareholders' balances.

Stuart Lyons

OUR article (December 11) about recent results from Royal Doulton commented on the management record of Stuart Lyons. He left the company in May 1997, more than 18 months earlier. He did not combine the role of chief executive and chairman, but reported to a board with an independent chairman and external directors. He left by mutual consent after business proposals, which the board and its advisers believed to be in the company's best interests, were not supported by a major shareholder. Our claim that he received no compensation on his departure was wrong, for which we apologise.

Coca-Cola warning hits US share prices

COCA-COLA, the world's biggest beverage company, yesterday shocked investors with its third profits warning in six months, pulling the US equities market back below 10,000 points as it opened (Andrew Butcher writes).

Worries about Coke's performance compounded concern about General Motors' lofty sales targets, and jitters affected nearly all 30 shares in the Dow Jones industrial average.

Worldwide sales woes, in contrast with an optimistic outlook previously promoted by Coke executives, sparked the decline in Coca-Cola shares. Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America — every one of Coke's international units — reported first-quarter volume cuts of 1 per cent to 2 per cent. The North American division, Coke's traditionally strong home base, expected volume growth of about 2 per cent.

The 113-year-old company has not had an annual fall in sales volume since 1954, and the global economic slowdown was generally not expected to have affected Coke as much as it has.

General Motors suffered as Richard Wagoner, its president, said that European sales were not up to scratch.

Lambert Fenchurch fined over review

THE Personal Investment Authority (PIA) has fined Lambert Fenchurch Financial Services £190,000 for failing to review its pensions mis-selling cases (Caroline Merrell writes).

The financial adviser and broker, formed from the merger of Lowndes Lambert and Fenchurch Insurance two years ago, will pay the fine plus £15,000 in legal costs, after being found guilty by the PIA of failing to hold a proper inquiry in the first phase of the pensions mis-selling review.

The broker said that the pensions mis-selling related to the period before the merger of the two companies. It has subsequently made an £8 million provision against mis-selling.

Financial advisers and life insurance companies have been forced to compensate hundreds of thousands of people who were encouraged to give up rights to occupational schemes in favour of taking out a personal pension. The total bill for compensation is expected to reach about £18 billion.

The first phase of the review, which ended on December 31, concerned people in, or near, retirement. The second phase is looking at younger clients.

More poker at Longbridge



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Ultimatums and deadlines have been part of the routine for decades at Longbridge, the motor plant with a *history. Herbert Austin's old* monster sank both the British Motor Corporation and British Leyland. It has been the albatross round the neck of any owner of the revived and in other ways attractive Rover group.

How delighted BMW would be to get rid of it, echoing the emotions of any of its owners since the 1960s. How different the fate of the British-owned motor industry might otherwise have been.

If that was easy, however, the Bavarian group would not still be haggling with *Stephen* Byers over the timing and amount of UK grants to help to reinvent Birmingham's pride and shame. A *cheque for £200 million would* be in the post, with a note respectfully saying that if more is needed later, British taxpayers will do *anything they could* to oblige.

BMW is still not quite the global player it claims to be. Its non-EU alternative, needed to wave money from taxpayers through Brussels competition regulators, is a greenfield project in Hungary that does not even have a green field. Had BMW thought things through, a new spare Far East plant might have made more sense.

Bernd Pischetsrieder, the sacked former BMW boss who got them into Rover, bought it for the great prize of Land Rover. It has not disappointed. Along with Land Rover, however, BMW had to take Longbridge *et al*, and to make sense of them in a long-term strategy for BMW.

The Bavarians were not aiming to challenge Ford or Toyota but to go as near as they dare via a range of innovative mid-market vehicles. These would add the bulk that would allow *BMW to* retain its independence in the global car market.

Both the new Mini and the *new small family car* are intended to be built at Longbridge. Somehow, you cannot see the market waiting for the first harvest *of Minis to s*pring from the Hungarian puszta.

The strategic mess has only been complicated by BMW's delayed launch of the new generation Rolls-Royce. This too may be homeless if Volkswagen/Bentley keeps the Crewe works.

So the nails are being bitten in Birmingham, in Whitehall and in Munich. The new team at BMW, though doubtless highly competent at developing and manufacturing motor cars, do not yet seem to be in the same league of cynical professionalism as their counterparts on the other sides of the negotiations. Mistakes cannot therefore be ruled out.

Rightly, the Government is in no mood to ladle out taxpayers' cash *ad lib*, especially for Long*bridge. It is no scare to* say that 50,000 West Midlands jobs are at stake. But Longbridge is a graveyard in which many of the *ambitions* for British industry that Whitehall dreamed up in the old interventionist days are now expensively buried.

Four weeks is ample time to sit back and tease out these issues. It should not be wasted. The stakes remain high and either side looks liable to miscalculate its hand spectacularly.

One day, all this will be ours

How poignant that the Ministry of Defence should give the first sightings of its potentially incendiary switch to resource accounting when our lads and lasses are risking their lives in the line of duty in the Balkans. Good tim*ing, chaps.*

At least it is pretty clear why Britain spends so unusually high a proportion of national income *on defence. More pertinently*, the timing reminds us why you have to tie up such vast tracts of valuable land, air and sea ports, property and equipment that many myopic folk are ordinarily prone to think might be put to some more intensive, productive use.

Converting the public sector to commercial accounting conventions has practical purposes, especially for the MoD. One is to end the Whitehall spending lottery at this time of year.

According to how the department's budget was going, you would take delivery of an extra frigate or paint the CO's quarters just before the end of one financial year, put it off a few days or shelve it until the same budget-filling ritual comes up in 12 months' time. If you allow for commitments and lay balance sheet concepts of debtors and creditors over cash accounting, spending can follow priorities.

A deeper purpose is to expose the true assets being employed and account properly for the costs of using them up. The MoD was most *vulnerable*. Exposing its full costs would point up the potential for contracting out, private-public partnerships and similar new-fangled names for the asset-stripping exercises that Gordon Brown is so keen on.

Gargantuan figures have been bandied about for the value of MoD assets and the true extra costs of amortising them. Conveniently, and perhaps realistically, the hidden treasures turn out to be smaller, as are the extra hidden running costs.

Even the most hard-headed accountants can argue vehemently about the value of something like Salisbury Plain or our bases in Cyprus. The value of a small county or chunks of a holiday island as prime housing plots is somewhat different from that of contaminated windswept heaths that would cost a fortune to restore to public amenity use.

The figures are still huge, *about £90 billion of assets before* nuclear clean-up costs. Treasury Scrooges will salivate over 700 leading land sites. But the biggest assets, according to the MoD, are operational Trident submarine weapon systems. There may be *little that MoD can properly do to* cut depreciation or to "make the assets sweat".

Mind you, it would surely make any attempt to scrap Trident on moral grounds look mind-bogglingly expensive.

Tartan temptation in the making

Scottish business has a tradition of misreading its fellow-citizens' national feelings. Could they get it right this time? With devolution on the way, the country's two independent quoted high street banks are pooling their native canniness, thrift and resources to build a joint acquisition finance house. It aims to take on the corporate might of Goldman Sachs and Chase Manhattan.

Both home champion Bank of Scotland and the more cosmopolitan Royal Bank *already offer* finance for smaller management buyouts. Their sights are now set on the bigger £100 million to *£400 million deals, both in the* UK and Europe. The joint venture will come into the market *with a lending rate modestly set* at 2 per cent above Libor. It intends to compete in the market dominated by the Americans by offering innovative deals.

Outsiders may think it entirely natural that the neighbours and rivals should come together in Caledonian Capital. In Scotland, however, many a refined eyebrow will be raised.

*Both banks were at pains yes*terday to deny that this was a prelude to any kind of merger. They have roughly equal large shares of the domestic market and claim such a deal would not pass muster. That may be true under the Anglo-Saxon preference for competition.

A Scottish government might prefer to sacrifice consumers and opt to have one powerful Scottish bank rather than, as otherwise seems likely, just two more local subsidiaries of foreign groups.

Divided they hope

AMAZING what a boost in the crude price can do for one's long-term strategy. While BP-Amoco strikes up the Wedding March again, Enterprise and Lasmo have switched to Let's Call the Whole Thing Off. The lost explorers tried to avoid repeating the costly pain of a hostile bid, only *to find that there is no such thing* as an equal merger. They split in civilised fashion, without the ego-screaming rancour of Smith*Kline Beecham and Glaxo Well*come, but investors are still liable to let them hang separately.

Australian takeover by Rugby

By Paul Armstrong

RUGBY GROUP has agreed to buy control of Australia's biggest cementmaker and plans to raise at least £250 million from the sale of non-core assets under a widely expected restructuring that was an*nounced yesterday.*

The moves are aimed at making Rugby solely a cement company and will leave it with up to £700 million to spend on further acquisitions in the industry.

Rugby has agreed to a A$325 million (£124 million) reverse takeover of Adelaide Brighton, an Australian-listed cement group, involving the sale of Rugby's Cockburn Cement business in return for Adelaide scrip.

The second tier of the deal will see Adelaide buy, for A$82 million, the 49 per cent of its key operating subsidiary, Adelaide Brighton Cement, that it does not already own.

The deals will leave Rugby with 55 per cent of the expanded Adelaide group, which will have 25 per cent of the Australian cement market.

Peter Johnson, chief executive of Rugby, said that merging the Cockburn and Adelaide operations was expected to deliver annual savings of about A$30 million.

He said that the deal, which *is subject to the approval of* both groups of shareholders and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, was expected to be completed by June.

Rugby Group also yesterday disclosed that it was in advanced negotiations to sell its joinery and US distribution businesses to Jeld-Wen, an American group. This is expected to raise slightly more than their carrying value of £251 million.

Details of the restructuring came as Rugby unveiled a marginal fall in 1998 pre-tax profits to £76.6 million, excluding exceptional charges and gains from disposals.

A final dividend of 2.55p was declared, taking the year's payout to 4.3p, up 7.5 per cent.

Tempus, page 28

Signet to keep US operations

By Matthew Barbour

SIGNET, the jewellery retailer, yesterday said that it had no plans to float or sell-off its US operations. The announcement comes in the wake of continued calls from a group of US investors, *holding about 6* per cent of shares, who argue that selling-off or floating at least 20 per cent of its US operations would create more value for shareholders.

Signet, which reported full-year pre-tax profits up 30 per cent at £89.2 million (£68.7 million), countered that such a move would erode the company's value. The US operations, called Sterling, accounted for two-thirds of group sales of £991.2 million last year and now comprise 70 per cent of group assets.

Signet is also set to pay its first dividend for almost eight years. Shareholders will receive a final dividend of 1p per share. Dividends were suspended in 1992. Earnings per *share rose to 3.9p (3p).*

Stanley bid agreed by Capital

By Dominic Walsh

STANLEY Leisure, the gaming group, yesterday persuaded the board of Capital Corporation to back its takeover bid after raising its all-cash offer from 80p a share to 85p.

The offer, which values the London casino operator at £86.4 million, was accompanied by a profit warning from Stanley relating to its bookmaking division where recent results had been "particularly disappointing".

In common with its competitors, margins have been hit by the large number of favourites winning races. It said profits in the year to May 2 would "not achieve market expectations". Leonard Steinberg, Stanley's chairman, added: "We know the situation will correct itself."

Its offer for Capital, which carries a share alternative, was only grudgingly accepted by Ernest Sharp, Capital's chairman, who claimed it still failed to "fully recognise Capi*tal's recovery potential*".

Save Group hints at petrol pricing truce

THE PETROL price war could be over, the chairman of Save Group, the independent forecourt retailer predicted yesterday after revealing that profits last year fell by more than a third (Carl Mortished writes).

James Frost said prices had now picked up after the Budget earlier this month, following a vicious period of discounting led by Esso's 2p per litre voucher promotion.

"We could, but I am not saying will, finally find ourselves at the end of the most expensive and bloody period ever in the history of the industry in the UK," Mr Frost said.

As the company sacrificed sales to preserve margins, Save's pre-tax profit before exceptional items fell from £9 million to £5.5 million in 1998, with sales almost flat at £422 million. The company expects sales in the first quarter to be 5 per cent below last year as a result of its policy of premium pricing during the Esso voucher campaign.

STOCK MARKET  MICHAEL CLARK

Mounting bid talk puts Pilkington in the frame

PILKINGTON, that perennial takeover target, was up and running on mounting speculation that a bid may finally be on the way.

The price of Britain's biggest glassmaker rose 4p to 79p in heavy trading that saw almost 12 million shares change hands.

If the speculators are to be believed an offer of 100p a share will land on the table today from either St Gobain, the French group, or **Wolseley**, up 7p at 462p.

Paolo Scaroni, chief executive, has been touring the Square Mile talking to brokers. His message has been upbeat with both the US and European automotive markets showing signs of accelerating.

The Pilkington share price has come up from a low at the start of the year of 50¼p which followed yet another profits warning.

Share prices generally halved earlier gains, with the FTSE 100 index ending 11.2 up at 6,264.1 as total turnover reached 1.17 billion shares.

An early mark-up was fuelled by fresh merger speculation and Wall Street's positive performance overnight which saw the Dow Jones industrial average close above 10,000 for the first time. But the opening fall in New York ahead of last night's Federal Reserve Open Market Committee meeting took the edge off prices in London later in the day.

Among leaders, **ICI** shaded 1p to 560p with dealers claiming that the group may soon reveal details of its proposed £2 billion sell-off.

Centrica fell 4¼p at 109p as 90.3 million shares were traded. Deutsche Bank arranged a bought deal in 41.22 million shares at 108p. They were sold on at 109p after being broken up into various parcels, including two of five million, a further line of 10.6 million and one of 4.8 million.

Almost 12 million **BAT** shares changed hands as the price jumped 22½p to 540½p. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, rates the shares a "buy". **Boots** dropped 28½p to 892p as Merrill Lynch, the broker, cut its recommendation for the shares from "accumulate" to "hold".

National Grid firmed 7½p to 445¾p as Goldman Sachs, the US securities house, raised its recommendation for the shares from "market perform" to "market outperform" and set a target price of 519p.

Reuters benefited from some bullish remarks from ABN Amro Hoare Govett, the broker, and rose 27½p to 891p.

After City presentations **Emap** dropped 61p to £12.20 with brokers Warburg Dillon Reed, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter and BT Alex Brown all downgrading their profit forecasts.



Despite revealing a rise in profits Charlie Parker, left, and Guy Buckley, chief operations officer, saw Clubhaus fall

Royalblue eased 2½p to 527½p as Alan Neilson, a director, unloaded 300,040 shares at 525p. This reduces his holding to 133,529, or less than 1 per cent.

Still reeling from last week's profits warning, **AEA Technology** fell another 33½p to 348½p. Sir Anthony Cleaver, chairman, has bought 10,000 shares at 380p. He now holds 28,985.

Devro, the troubled sausage skin supplier, climbed 19p to 142p on talk of an offer of 200p a share soon. Inn Business, the tenanted pub operator, rose 3p to 69½p despite confirmation from Enterprise Inns that it has withdrawn its recent 75p-a-share offer. The rise in its share price — allied to its earlier refusal of Enterprise's offer — suggests others may be out there ready to pay more than 75p. Alchemy Partners, the venture capitalist that acquired Ushers of Trowbridge, is tipped to make a move.

AIM-listed **Mears**, the building maintenance and service specialist, held steady at 12½p. The group is on target to achieve pre-tax profits of £1.2 million in the current year, having lifted them 26 per cent last time. Between 40 per cent and 50 per cent of the shares are already tied up. Eaglet Investment Trust holds 12 per cent. Mears, headed by Bob Holt, is likely to attract the attention of Michael Ashcroft's acquisitive Carlisle Holdings.

Scottish Metropolitan Properties stood out with a jump of 6½p to 85p as one buyer paid for stock at a premium to the ruling price. A line of 9.75 million shares was snapped up at 83½p with a further 7.93 million and 1.15 million bought at 83½p.

Investors gave a lukewarm response to final results from **Clubhaus**, down 6p at 58½p. The golf course and health and fitness operator, whose managing director is Charlie Parker, raised profits last year from £4.3 million to £7 million and said current trading was in line with expectations.

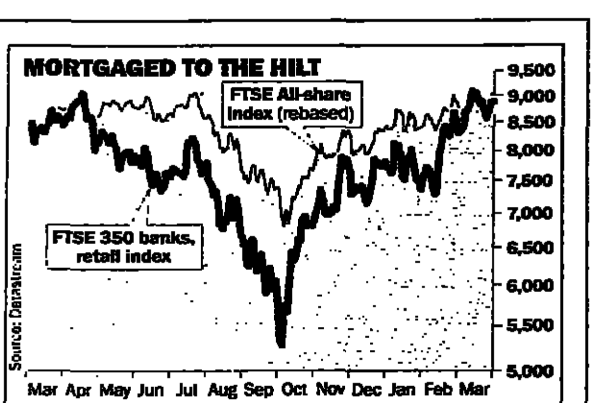
There was a late response to Monday's profits warning from **Jones, Stroud Holdings** after the official close of business. The shares slumped 25p, or 16 per cent, yesterday to 130p.

☐ **GILT EDGED:** Bond prices in London enjoyed modest gains with investors worried about a tightening of US monetary policy ahead of last night's FOMC meeting.

Longer-dated issues recovered some of Monday's losses.

In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt finished 21p up at £116.97, while among conventional issues Treasury 9 per cent 2008 was 27p dearer at £133.46.

☐ **NEW YORK:** Investors were cautious as Federal Reserve policymakers met to discuss interest rates. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 52.73 at 9,954.05.



MORTGAGE activity is on the increase, and the mortgage lenders should be in a position to take advantage of it.

Earlier this month the British Bankers' Association recorded a near 3 per cent drop to £3.6 billion in February. However, this masked a near 20 per cent rise on the previous year.

Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, the US securities house, forecasts that net lending this year will be £27 billion, compared with a forecast of £24 billion made at the start of the year. Last year the figure was £25.5 billion. This increase in activity, combined with possible share buybacks, bode well for the sector.

Leading the way is likely to be Alliance & Leicester, up 9p at 864p. Morgan Stanley expects A&L shares to "outperform".

Neutral performances are expected from Abbey National, down 10p at £12.68, Halifax, 14p lower at 761½p, Woolwich 7¼p off at 386p, and Northern Rock, 4p easier at 507p.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	9954.05 (-52.73)
S&P Composite	1306.72 (-3.45)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	15859.12 (-149.72)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	10940.21 (+251.74)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index	534.40 (-0.16)

Sydney:

AO	2995.3 (+21.3)

Frankfurt:

DAX	4856.84 (-20.58)

Singapore:

Strait	1518.08 (+20.58)

Brussels:

BEL20	3260.80 (+6.43)

Paris:

CAC-40	4141.98 (-11.67)

Zurich:

SMI Index	7024.1 (-62.2)

London:

FT 30	3802.9 (-1.1)
FTSE 100	6264.1 (+11.2)
FTSE 250	5475.8 (+6.4)
FTSE 350	2978.7 (+5.0)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2903.26 (-8.95)
FTSE All-Share	2883.10 (+4.76)
FTSE Non Financials	2926.54 (+2.32)
FTSE Fixed Interest	153.60 (+0.18)
FTSE Govt Secs	113.36 (-0.5)
Bargains	95143
SEAQ Volume	1175.4m
US$	1.6135 (-0.0052)
Euro	0.6669 (+0.0050)
£:SDR	1.1937
Exchange Index	103.2 (-0.6)

Bank of England official close (4pm)

RPI	163.7 Feb (2.1%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	162.3 Feb (2.4%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Axon Group	271½	+	5
BGI Endowment III	99½		...
Cairngorm Euro Restruct	105½	−	1
Cairngorm Restruct Wrts	25½		...
Canary Wharf (WI)	332	−	1½
Enhanced Zero Trust	100½		...
Gander Properties	7½		...
Gartmore High Income	106		...
Gartmore Zero Div Pf	106¾		...
Govett Enhanced Dv Pf	102½	+	1
Govett Enhanced Inc	94		...
Jupiter En Zero Dv Pf	108	+	1
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	101¼		...
Luminar Warrants	250		...
M Currie Cap Return	75½	+	¾
M Currie Portfolio	80¼	+	1
Morse Holdings	244	−	1
Murray Global Return B Uts	185		...
Murray Global Return Prf	102¼	−	¼
Murray Global Return Units	184½		...
NBA Quantum	110		...
Sports Internet	143½	+	6

RIGHTS ISSUES

First Tech Cnv Prf n/p (320)	28	+	2
Holmes Place n/p (275)	19	−	2½
Waste Recycling n/p (406)	45	−	16

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
REA	60	+ 10	+ 20.0
Devro	142	+ 19	+ 15.4
Q Group	77½	+ 10	+ 14.8
CNC Props	88½	+ 10½	+ 13.4
Hercules Prop	208½	+ 17	+ 8.8
Clarke T	148½	+ 11	+ 8.0
Norbain	226½	+ 16½	+ 7.8
Camellia	3500	+250	+ 7.6
Stallware	270	+ 17½	+ 6.9
Williams	396¼	+ 22¼	+ 5.9
Hutch Whamp	491¾	+ 25¼	+ 5.4
COLT Telecom	1016	+ 45	+ 4.6
Bemrose	344	+ 15	+ 4.5

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Jones Stroud	130	− 25	− 16.1
Cussins	85	− 12	− 12.3
Zergo	750	− 90	− 10.7
AEA Tech	348½	− 33½	− 8.7
Spring Gp	131	− 11½	− 8.0
Iceland Group	252½	− 15	− 5.6
BTG	298	− 17	− 5.3

TEMPUS

Sandwich spread

SHAREHOLDERS in Terranova, the demerged prepared foods part of Hillsdown Holdings, have much to lose if Unigate, currently bidding 125p a share for their company, is given the brush off. Investors have already been disappointed once, when a much-talked-about bid from Unigate for the whole of Hillsdown, before demerger, came to nothing this time last year. After Unigate's original bid, and before its offer for Terranova, shares in rump Hillsdown and its successor companies have performed appallingly. It is all too easy to see Terranova stock sliding sharply if the current hostile offer is turned away.

Yet at 125p, Unigate's cash offer looks just a bit too cheeky. Terranova faces challenges — particularly in relation to the Buxted Foods poultry operation and to the general economic climate on the Continent. But Terranova's sandwich-making activities are the higher-margin end of the food production industry and Unigate's 125p is barely 12 times Terranova's prospective earnings per share for 1999.

If Unigate lifts to 140p it could walk away with Terranova, and would probably receive the blessing of the Terranova board. The stock market clearly believes Unigate will pay a bit more. Terranova shares have been changing hands at about 135p since the bid was mooted earlier this month.

The narrowness of the potential uplift from the current market price means it is probably too late to buy into Terranova in the hope of short-term bid gains. But the likelihood of an agreed deal at a small premium to the current market price means it is worth current owners holding on. There is a small chance that a rival bidder will materialise, too.

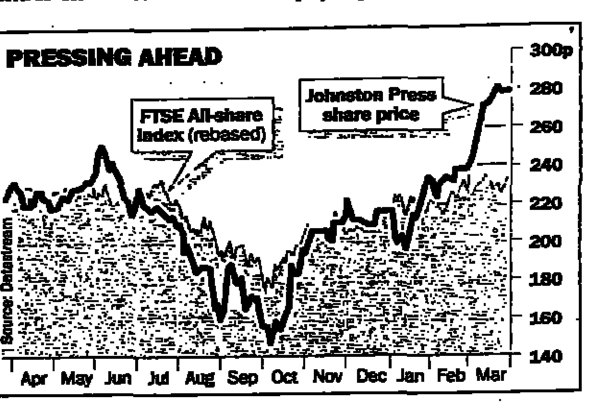
Johnston Press

IT IS safe to assume that this summer will see further consolidation of the regional newspaper industry.

Yesterday there was a new flurry of interest as Adscene, the fifteenth-largest regional publisher, received an approach. Meanwhile, Johnston Press, Adscene's larger rival, established its credentials in the battle for the future ownership of Portsmouth & Sunderland Newspapers. Several rival bids for P&S, including one from Johnston, are currently being examined by the competition authorities.

With annual results yesterday Johnston demonstrated that is a careful publisher of local and regional papers. The company also showed what lucrative little earners can be spun off out of an established, and seemingly mature, local newspaper franchise. In 1997 Johnston had revenues of £250,000 from premium telephone lines — mainly dating services. By 1998 the total was £650,000 and this year premium line revenues are expected to rise to £1 million.

The company hopes that Internet revenues will take off in a similar way. Johnston already has 14 of its publishing centres on line and all 30 will be connected by the end of the year. Johnston shares rose 3p to a high of 280½p yesterday. It is tempting to take profits, especially because it will have to stretch to win control of P&S, and in the short term the shares may meander. Longer term, however, investors can retain faith in the continuing attractions of regional newspaper publishing.



Rugby Group

SHARES in Rugby Group should benefit from the decision to focus activities on cement. It may not be the most glamorous of industries, but the company's motley combination of cement, doors and various window products is the sort of asset spread despised by the stock market in these industry-specific times.

The re-engineering of the group structure began in earnest yesterday with the £125 million reverse takeover of Adelaide Brighton, the Australian cement producer with 25 per cent of its home market. However, the disposal of the windows and doors business should leave Rugby with another £700 million to expand in its chosen field.

Acquisitions will fuel Rugby's profits, of course. But the outlook for organic growth is less promising — especially as Rugby does not have the exposure to emerging markets that enhances the attractions of, for example, Blue Circle. The UK and Australian building markets are unlikely to generate earnings growth that is anywhere near exciting in the short term.

Eventually the tighter strategic focus may earn Rugby shares a premium rating. At present, they trade on a prospective earnings multiple of 13 times, and although that is cheap compared with the market as a whole, it is also fair for the moment.

Hewden Stuart

HEWDEN STUART is not the only company in the out-of-favour construction sector to talk a big game about being an outsourcing specialist. However, Hewden — a Glasgow company best known for renting out cranes, plant and tools — at least keeps this talk within reasonable limits.

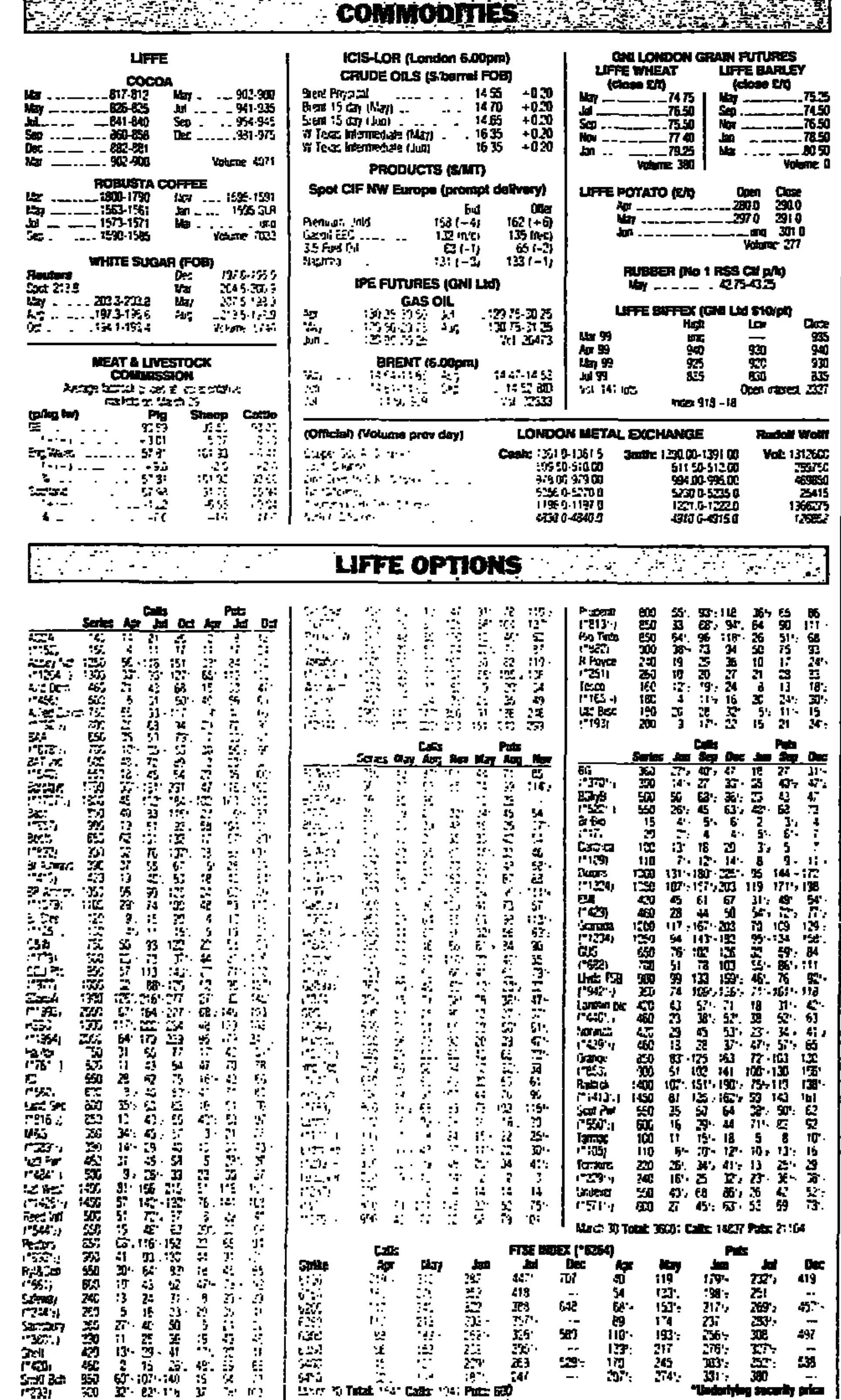
Hewden earns its outsourcing credentials because of the dedicated plant management work that it does. In one part of its business, its people take up residence on large industrial sites, such as petrochemical plants, to handle equipment rental and maintenance needs.

Similar opportunities are being pursued. However, Alistair Napier, the chief executive, is refreshingly honest about the potential in these opportunities. He says that the in situ work will never account for more than £25 million a year in sales, less than a tenth of total turnover.

Growth must be found, therefore, in the expansion of traditional tool rental. Hewden is targeting the South of England for the development of its chain of tool hire shops, but competition is intense, with the likes of Ashtead, one of the class acts of the sector, lurking.

Hewden's shares trade on about 11 times forecast earnings, and, at 134.5p, the dividend yield is an ungenerous 3.6 per cent. At best, a hold.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE



COMMODITIES

LIFFE COCOA

Mar	817-812	May	902-900
May	826-825	Jul	941-935
Jul	841-840	Sep	954-945
Sep	860-858	Dec	981-975
Dec	882-881		
Mar	902-900	Volume	4071

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm) CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	14.55	+0.20
Brent 15 day (May)	14.70	+0.20
Brent 15 day (Jun)	14.65	+0.20
W Texas Intermediate (May)	16.35	+0.20
W Texas Intermediate (Jun)	16.35	+0.20

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
May	74.75	May	75.25
Jul	76.50	Sep	74.50
Sep	75.50	Nov	76.50
Nov	77.40	Jan	78.50
Jan	79.25	Mar	80.50
Volume: 380		Volume: 0	

LIFFE OPTIONS

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Jun 99	116.68	117.07	116.62	117.00	19694	73708
	Sep 99				116.70	0	0
5-Year Gilt	Jun 99				108.38	0	0
	Sep 99					0	0
Italian Govt Bond	Jun 99	112.70	112.96	112.54	112.89	8982	34984
Japanese Govt Bond	Jun 99	132.70	132.83	132.68			752
	Sep 99	131.78	131.78	131.78			10
3-Mth Sterling	Jun 99	95.020	95.030	94.990	95.000	10519	180483
	Sep 99	95.100	95.110	95.070	95.080	13699	192025
	Dec 99	94.850	94.860	94.840	94.840	4600	141060
3-Mth Euribor	Jun 99	97.155	97.180	97.145	97.175	42869	203650
	Sep 99	97.180	97.220	97.180	97.205	37498	184318
	Dec 99	96.975	97.000	96.960	96.990	11367	163806
	Mar 00	97.095	97.140	97.090	97.125	17542	91942
	Jun 00	96.925	97.050	96.985	97.040	18073	62188
3-Mth Euroswiss	Jun 99	98.740	98.760	98.720	98.730	11714	114075
	Sep 99	98.630	98.670	98.630	98.640	7491	57568
3-Mth Euro Libor	Jun 99	97.160	97.170	97.160	97.175	1555	106095
	Sep 99	97.190	97.190	97.190	97.205	100	93018
	Dec 99				96.990	0	83397
	Mar 00	97.095	97.125	97.095	97.125	42	64144
	Jun 00				97.040	0	63422
FTSE 100	Jun 99	6300.0	6334.0	6256.0	6304.5	29159	184842
	Sep 99				6348.5	0	3373

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 5½ Finance House 5½

Discount Market Loans: O'night high 6¼ Low 5¼ Week fixed 5¼

Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy 2 mth 5¼, 3 mth 5, Sell 2 mth 4⅞, 3 mth 4[illegible]

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Overnight: open 5½ close 5¼					
Local Authority Deps:	5⅜	n/a	5⅛	5¼	5¼
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	4.87	n/a	4.90	4.97	5.22
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5-4
Sterling:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Canada:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open: $[illegible] Close: $279.50-280.00 High: $280.00-280.40 Low: $279.50-[illegible] AM: $28[illegible].05 PM: $279.60

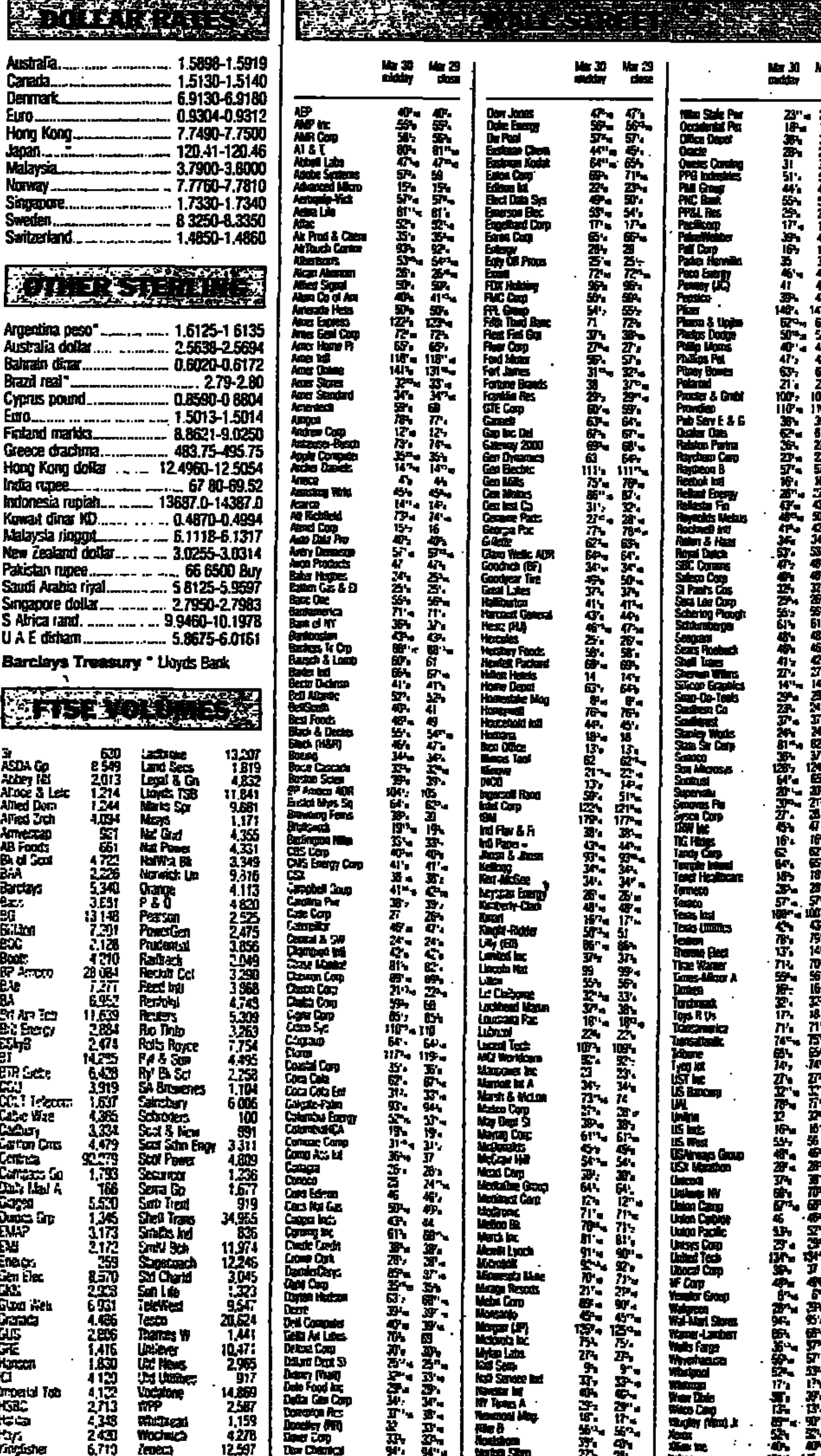
Krugerrand: $[illegible] ([illegible])

Platinum: $36[illegible] ([illegible]) Silver: $5.05 ([illegible]) Palladium: $362.00 ([illegible])

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for March 30	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	11.133-11.212	11.133-11.145	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro	1.4984-1.5001	1.4987-1.5001	0.13-0.15ds	0.36-0.39ds
Montreal	2.4392-2.4495	2.4392-2.4421	0.12-0.05pr	0.22-0.08pr
New York	1.6123-1.6174	1.6132-1.6141	0.675-0.475pr	0.105-0.075pr
Oslo	12.519-12.595	12.519-12.535	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stockholm	13.408-13.501	13.408-13.432	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tokyo	194.11-194.53	194.22-194.46	[illegible]	[illegible]
Zurich	2.3937-2.4065	2.3957-2.3966	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds



DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5898-1.5919
Canada	1.5130-1.5140
Denmark	6.9130-6.9180
Euro	0.9304-0.9312
Hong Kong	7.7490-7.7500
Japan	120.41-120.46
Malaysia	3.7900-3.8000
Norway	7.7760-7.7810
Singapore	1.7330-1.7340
Sweden	8.3250-8.3350
Switzerland	1.4850-1.4860

OTHER STERLING

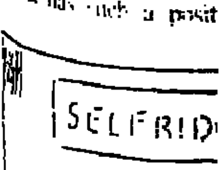
Argentina peso*	1.6125-1.6135
Australia dollar	2.5638-2.5694
Bahrain dinar	0.6020-0.6172
Brazil real*	2.79-2.80
Cyprus pound	0.8590-0.8804
Euro	1.5013-1.5014
Finland markka	8.8621-9.0250
Greece drachma	483.75-495.75
Hong Kong dollar	12.4960-12.5054
India rupee	67.80-69.52
Indonesia rupiah	13687.0-14387.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4870-0.4994
Malaysia ringgit	6.1118-6.1317
New Zealand dollar	3.0255-3.0314
Pakistan rupee	66.6500 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.8125-5.9597
Singapore dollar	2.7950-2.7983
S Africa rand	9.9460-10.1978
U A E dirham	5.8675-6.0161

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

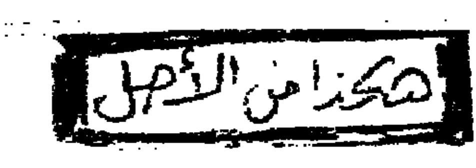
FTSE VOLUMES

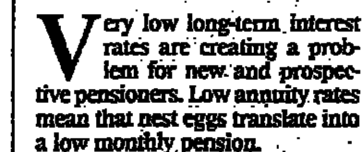
3i	620	Ladbroke	13,207
ASDA Gp	8,549	Land Secs	1,819
Abbey Ntl	2,013	Legal & Gn	4,832
Alnce & Leic	1,214	Lloyds TSB	11,841
Allied Dom	1,244	Marks Spr	9,681
Allied Zurich	4,094	Meyts	1,171
Amvescap	921	Nat Grid	4,355
AB Foods	661	Nat Power	4,331
Bk of Scot	4,722	NatWst Bk	3,349
BAA	2,226	Norwich Un	9,316
Barclays	5,340	Orange	4,113
Bass	3,651	P & O	4,820
BG	13,148	Pearson	2,525
Billiton	7,201	PowerGen	2,475
BOC	2,128	Prudential	3,856
Boots	4,210	Railtrack	2,049
BP Amoco	28,084	Reckitt Ccl	3,290
BAe	7,271	Reed Intl	3,968
BA	6,957	Rentokil	4,749
Brit Am Tob	11,639	Reuters	5,309
Brit Energy	2,884	Rio Tinto	3,263

WALL STREET









Free lunch for Britain's pensioners

Very low long-term interest rates are creating a problem for new and prospective pensioners. Low annuity rates mean that nest eggs translate into a low monthly pension.

Such rates are not great for private pension providers either. Low bond yields mean that future liabilities are discounted at very low rates, increasing their present value. Bigger liabilities mean a smaller fund. In order to reduce risk in that situation, insurance companies and other pension providers are impelled to reduce their equity holdings in favour of government bonds.

Yet the Government is not borrowing very much at present and is forecast to repay debt as its budget moves into surplus. Strong demand and no supply is creating a shortage of long-dated low-risk assets and this is reflected in a very strange pattern of interest rates in the UK market. UK 30-year bonds yield slightly less than ten-year bonds. And while ten-year bonds here yield 50 basis points (half a percentage point) more than their German Government counterparts, UK 30-year bonds yield 50 basis points less than their German equivalents. British long-dated index-linked bonds yield a miserable 1 per cent at the time of writing, compared with 3 per cent for US Treasury index-linked bonds.

Clearly the Government is missing a great opportunity. It is the monopoly supplier of long-dated risk-free assets to the financial markets. Other triple-A rated borrowers exist, but their balance sheets would not support the kind of issuance that the market needs. Moreover, no private entities borrow at the longest end of the market anyway. The Government could issue a great deal of debt in the 10 to 30 year range and do everyone a favour. Suppose it wanted to push the yield on 30-year bonds up to German levels, making life a little easier for pensioners and pension providers. There is a rough rule of thumb that says that yields would increase by about ten basis points for every 1 per cent of GDP it added to its debt. That implies it could put out about £35 billion of long-dated bonds at an average interest rate of about 5 per cent.

But what would the Government do with all that money? Not spend it, evidently, since it has to acquire assets to balance its liabilities. The obvious thing to do is what President Clinton suggested recently: invest it in the stock market. The annual return on UK equities has been well into double digits in the past decade or two. But let us be conservative, or prudent, to use a word favoured by the Chancellor. Suppose the stock market returned on average only 7 per cent a year going forward, about its average over the whole period since the early 1960s. The Government would have a new revenue stream equivalent to an average 2 per cent of £35 billion, some £700 million a year. It would not come in like clockwork, of course, because equity markets go up and down, but on average it would be there.



GERALD HOLTHAM

That money could be used to finance the state pension scheme, still essential for those people too poor to be able to afford an adequate private scheme. Britain has nearly ten million pensioners, receiving £30 million in basic old-age pension. The extra income would enable each of them to receive an extra £70 a year. The beauty of this scheme is that it conforms to all the tenets of new Labour: no dogma; government should not usurp the functions of the private sector: it should do only that which no other agency can do. Well, only the State can supply riskless assets on the scale that the markets require; only the State can borrow so cheaply; only the State can carry out the arbitrage between the risk-free interest rate and the higher return available in the equity market.

Some will no doubt echo the concerns of Alan Greenspan, the Fed Chairman, when he heard of President Clinton's plan to invest US social security funds in the stock market. He feared political interference with investment processes and even with the management of companies with shares in public hands.

These are legitimate concerns, but accommodating them is elementary. Evidently, the funds must not be in the hands of politicians. A Community Chest could be established to be administered by a Board of Trustees appointed for long terms and with no option of reappointment. Their statutes should make them as independent of government as, say, the European Central Bank. Moreover, those statutes should oblige the trustees to put the funds out to commercial management, so that they would end up being run by the same people and institutions as private pension money. These managers would address corporate governance issues in the same way that they do now. The Government would have nothing to do with any of it.

Of course, the Community Chest's operations could be counted as part of the PSBR, if the Treasury insists, but they would not endanger the Chancellor's "golden rules". All borrowing would be for investment, by definition. And while the gross debt-to-GDP ratio of the public sector would rise, its net debt would not, since the bond issuance would be balanced by equity acquisition. Since the equities would rise in value while the bonds did not, the net debt would be most likely to fall.

Private and public pensioners would be better off and the dictates of prudence would be observed. If only all public policy problems were so easy to solve!

Gerald Holtham is Global Strategist, Norwich Union Investment Management. The author writes here in a personal capacity and the views expressed are his own.

Hugo Boss prepares to focus effort on attracting women

The menswear designer believes it can overcome its macho image, says **Sarah Cunningham**

Launching a leading women's fashion label is not a task to be undertaken lightly, which is why Hugo Boss, one of the world's leading men's fashion houses, has spent no less than 15 years working on its plans.

Werner Baldessarini, the chairman and chief executive of Hugo Boss, is well aware of the pitfalls. An ill-fated attempt was made 12 years ago to add a handful of women's items to the main men's range. So this time Hugo Boss is going all the way, with a full range of Boss for women due in the shops in two years' time.

Perhaps the main obstacle for Boss is that it is such an unreservedly masculine brand. The actual name; the mean-and-moody advertising; the long-standing sponsorship of Formula One motor racing; the clothing itself, with its emphasis on tailored suits — it is all rather macho.

Herr Baldessarini says that the image problem is surmountable. A toe has been dipped in the water with the launch of a "Hugo" women's wear collection which has sold well. Like the Hugo-labelled menswear, it is aimed at a younger, funkier audience than the main Boss range, which makes up more than 90 per cent of the company's sales.

Another look will also be taken at sponsorship to make it more appealing to women, although he is determined not to give up his beloved F1, and says: "We are not about to start sponsoring ballet." Also, a Boss women's fragrance will be launched, by licence-holder Procter & Gamble, before the first clothing collection finally hits the stores in 2001.

Most importantly, Hugo Boss announced yesterday that women's wear will be run by a separate team and based in Milan, far from the company's German headquarters. Herr Baldessarini, who oversees all of the menswear designs, will take more of a back seat in dealing with women's clothing.

"I cannot do women's wear, I find it difficult to design things that I cannot wear myself. But I can say what I like and, for sure, if I do not like the collection it won't come on the market," he says.

Even at this stage, there is going to be no rush to bring out the women's range. "We are going to do a full collection, then bring it out half a year later. I do not want to endanger the men's line."

An Italian women's wear specialist is heading the new venture and is beginning to recruit designers and staff to work in Milan. Hugo Boss is investing an initial DM50 million (£17 million), and hopes to see sales of DM100 million in the first year, building up to DM300 million a year.

Although this will be huge in comparison with the Hugo women's wear's first season sales of just DM7 million, compared to the men's side of the business, it is small beer. During 1998, sales of the Boss label menswear grew to DM1.23 billion (DM1.04 billion) out of a group total of DM 1.34 billion. The group has relatively low exposure to Asia, and has seen its sales rise steadily in the late Nineties while other fashion houses have stalled.

Hugo Boss is unusual among the international fashion brands, and not only because of its concentration on menswear. Unlike the classic fashion house such as Christian Dior and Chanel, or the more recently founded Jean-Paul Gaultier and Paul Smith, it is a fictional brand. The real Hugo Boss was the uncle of Juchen and Uwe Holy, the brothers who founded the company in the early Seventies. His name was used not because he had anything to do with the business, but because it sounded good.

Also, the company is based in Metzingen, a small town in southern Germany. Herr Baldessarini jokes that Metzingen is like Beverley Hills to Stuttgart's Los Angeles, but even he was horrified when he joined the company 23 years ago. For the first few years used to head off to Munich, his home town, every weekend. Now, he likes it. "I'm married, I've grown to like fresh air, I like the people and I travel a lot," he says.

Hugo Boss has, since 1991, been part of Italy's Marzotto textiles group. On the whole the German company has been allowed to maintain its sense of independence. Marzotto has representatives on the Hugo Boss supervisory board and supplies it, as it did before it owned it, with fabrics.

Herr Baldessarini, who is now 54 years old and took over as chairman and chief executive at the end of last year, abhors the signs of consolidation within the fashion sector. The attempts by LVMH, the French luxury goods conglomerate, to bring Gucci, the Italian brand, into its fold make no sense to him. "Why is Chrysler with Mercedes? That also seems very strange to me. Each company has to have a soul and people want brands with an honest character.

"Perhaps when others become too big, it is a good chance for the smaller companies," he says.

References to cars and the car industry scatter his conversation. He usually drives a black Porsche 911, and at one stage was asked to design his own version. The Baldessarini 911 was, he says, too expensive to produce. But his favourite car is a Jaguar and he loves it not just as a classic design and piece of engineering, but because "it is always a little trouble, but it is the clearest design in automobiles. It is perfect."

Perfection comes from companies with a coherent vision, he says. "I don't believe in all this talk of synergies." Although Hugo Boss considered buying an existing women's wear business, rather than setting up from scratch, he was never really tempted. "Building up a new business is very exciting," Herr Baldessarini says. "I don't remember anyone doing it on this scale. It's a big challenge and we must be careful."

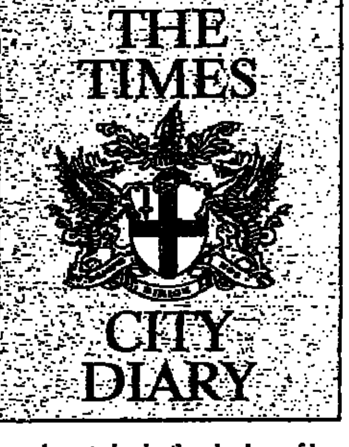
Vittorio Radice, the chief executive of Selfridges, the department store company, stocks Hugo Boss menswear and says he is looking forward to seeing Boss women's wear: "I'll give you an example — Paul Smith launched women's wear and it has sold very well. Boss will be the same. I hope I will be the first to stock it."

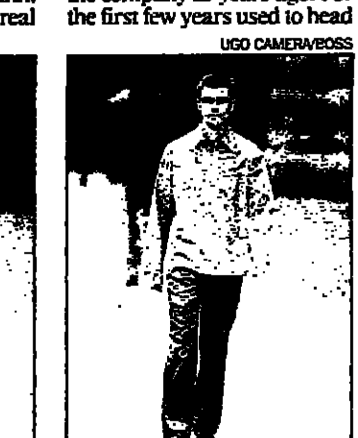
REGINA RECHT/HUGO BOSS



Werner Baldessarini aims to make the brand more appealing to women but said: "We're not about to start sponsoring ballet"

UGO CAMERA/BOSS





Hugo Boss is renowned for its sharply styled suits but has begun moving towards a younger, funkier look

BUSINESS LETTERS

Year 2000 compliance problems can be resolved

From Mr David Clark

Sir, In response to Hugh Kearns (Business letters, March 25) may I allay fears somewhat of a complete meltdown in the City of London come January 1, 2000. My company is currently working with a number of financial houses in the City to make sure they are definitely not one of the "12 rotten apples in the barrel" by a very quick, yet thorough and effective Y2K audit of embedded systems.

Whilst I cannot defend those City financial names who have not had a comprehensive audit, I can offer some assurance that any Y2K compliance problem can be quickly resolved. Businesses have been bombarded by a great deal of unfounded panic and hype regarding the so-called millennium bug and, while there are certainly potential problems if companies do nothing to make their systems compliant, the answer is to act now, and decisively.

The City's financial houses and other companies must ensure that they manage all areas of risk to their business. For instance, embedded systems, where the code used to control computers, are often overlooked. Such systems include fire alarms, plant controls, UPS equipment, access control, lifts and generators.

We aim to make sure that the business operations, and hence the business which is being supported by technology, are going to survive. So in answer to Mr Kearns's question, "who is going to do what and when?" may I suggest that those concerned should give me a call.

Yours sincerely,
D. CLARK,
BSC Consulting,
24/26 Baltic Street West,
London,
EC1Y 0UR.

Blue Circle move stood test of time

From Mr Lionel Mendoza

Sir, In Paul Armstrong's interesting article on the exploitation of Blue Circle Industries extensive land holdings in Kent, he finishes by asking, "Why didn't someone think of it [the development] before?"

As someone who acted as property adviser to Blue Circle in the late Seventies and early Eighties, I can inform your readers that the notion of a multimillion pound mixed development comprising retail, leisure, industry, offices and possibly housing was indeed thoroughly investigated.

That oldest of property adages — "name the three most important priorities in terms of a successful property venture — location, location, location" — was as true then as ever. The advent of the M25 for accessibility, the benefits of the cross-Channel connection and other strategic benefits, together with the growth in leisure and the attitudes of town planners and funding institutions, were not then as apparent.

Which brings me on to that other great maxim, this time not solely connected with real estate but of life generally, namely timing! It is often the case, as in this instance, that even the most inauspicious piece of land can, in time, rise in value.

The Blue Circle holding was always going to be a winner — in time!

Yours faithfully,
LIONEL MENDOZA,
Woodpeckers,
Hangerwood,
Shermanbury,
RH13 8HJ.

Fresh fields

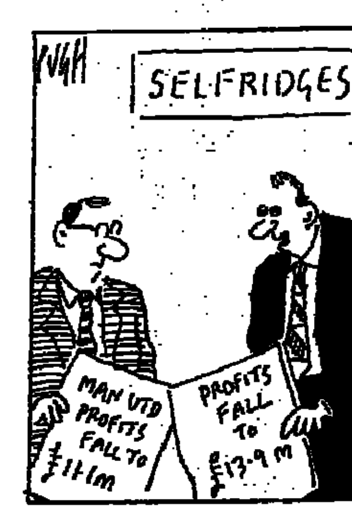
THE TIMES CITY DIARY

THIS must be a sign of the times, as lawyers become increasingly aware of the commercial realities which we all have to observe. Kirk Stephenson, former finance director of Coats Viyella until the demerger was pulled last September, is joining Freshfields, one of our biggest City lawyers, as chief operating officer.

I am not aware of any other legal firm that has such a position, although I will now probably be deluged with examples. Stephenson quit Coats about when the demerger was abandoned *sine die* and has been looking around for an appropriate position since.

Only a fortnight ago the Coats chairman, Sir David Alliance, and his chief executive also announced their departure.

Stephenson is an old City hand, starting at SG Warburg and then working at Morgan Stanley before he went into industry.



"At least we're above Manchester United this year"

A FULSOME eulogy to the two departed directors of J Sainsbury from the chairman, Sir George Bull. "My colleagues and I want to express our appreciation for the contribution made by Rosemary Thorne and David Clapman," he says.

Actually, it's David Clapham, Sir George. As in Junction. Sainsbury admit the mistake and have apologised. But then, he had only been there 35 years. As the saying goes, I'll never forget whatsisname.

Duff note

THE woman known as "the Hillary Clinton of the record industry" for her abrupt rise in the shadow of her husband has just been granted shares in EMI worth £45,000. They are part of the senior executive incentive plan at the company and will go to Nancy Berry.

She is vice-chairman of Virgin Records America. She is also wife of Ken Berry, who runs EMI's recorded music side, and this has required the announcement.

It will not do much to change her lifestyle — she probably spends about that much a year on flowers for their Bel Air mansion in Los Angeles. Plus, her husband is on a maximum package of $7.4 million a year.

Reports suggested that her promotion by her husband caused a rift between him and Sir Colin Southgate, the now departed EMI chairman.

ONE OF Lloyd's of London's more maverick underwriters is insisting he has insured 30 members of the Royal Household against the possibility of being sacked by the Queen.

Simon Burgess, who admits he specialises in exotic insurance policies for their novelty value and for publicity purposes, says the retainers have taken up his "revolutionary" — odd choice of words, that — unemployment policy.

He says they approached him through a legitimate Lloyd's broker, which asked him to write a group policy. I have no idea whether any of this is true; I merely record that his agency has previously offered insurance policies against virgin birth and alien abduction and allow you to draw your own conclusions.

Pen pals

AN UNUSUAL investment opportunity from France. Jean-Marie Le Pen, the right-wing politician whose National Front once took 15 per cent of the vote, is offering high returns to those of his supporters prepared to lend him money.

He is offering an interest rate of 5 per cent to anyone prepared to back his party to fight this summer's elections for the European Parliament. This compares with the scant 3 per cent or less you would get from any of the normal French banks.

I would not rush to invest, though. "Le Pen makes no bones about the fact that he needs money desperately," my informant tells me. Since the National Front split in two, the French Government has put a block on the £4.3 million it was providing the party to fight the election.

As a result neither side of the split has access to this, and Le Pen's best chance of repaying any loans he raises is to mend the rift and unblock this freeze. It is not, I am told, a good bet.

MARTIN WALLER

city.diary@the-times.co.uk



Jean-Marie Le Pen is seeking funds to fight an election

Japanese jobless total rises to record level

From Robert Whymant in Tokyo

HOPES of an imminent economic recovery for Japan were dented yesterday by government figures showing unemployment at record levels, and a sharp decline in families' willingness to spend.

The unemployment rate jumped to 4.6 per cent in February, a rise of 0.2 percentage points from the previous month. This compares with 4.4 per cent in America. There were 3.13 million workers without jobs, exceeding the three million mark for the first time since the Government started compiling data in 1953.

The abrupt rise came as a setback for Japanese leaders, who have insisted in recent weeks that the nation's worst postwar recession has bottomed out and a turnround is imminent.

Taiichi Sakaiya, head of Japan's Economic Planning Agency, said: "Frankly speaking, we have to admit that the February data was worse than expected." Only two days ago Mr Sakaiya gave an optimistic forecast that the economy would pick up towards the end of this year because of public works spending and increased sales of apartments.

Adding to the gloom, data released yesterday showed that spending by Japanese wage-earners' households fell 4.1 per cent in real terms in February. The Government reported that families spent just 67.8 per cent of their disposable income, down from 70.9 per cent in January, marking the lowest "propensity to consume" on record.

"This shows that the economy's ability to rebound is still extremely weak," Mr Sakaiya said.

Spending by Japanese consumers makes up roughly 60 per cent of the economy, but people are in no hurry to spend their way out of recession.

Despite hopeful signs — a government bailout has stabilised the nation's shaky banks, and share prices have rebounded — Japanese consumers remain wary.

With scores of firms announcing plans to streamline their operations — including large companies such as Toshiba and NEC — the outlook for labour is unsettling. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's appeal to citizens to shake off their gloom and embrace "constructive optimism" has fallen on deaf ears.

The word that Japanese workers have come to dread most is *ristora* — restructuring — which is spreading as firms pare labour costs to weather the recession and boost competitiveness.

Scotia chief condemns legacy of founder

By Paul Durman

ROB DOW, chief executive of Scotia Holdings, yesterday launched a scathing attack on the state of the drug development company when he took over from its founder David Horrobin 15 months ago.

Dr Dow found he had to abandon 21 research projects because of "equivocal research data, poor quality development data or inadequate commercial opportunity". Scotia had "significant inadequacies in skills in several key areas", and too many people on too many sites. Trials of Foscan, the cancer drug that is its most important product, were "significantly behind schedule".

The loss of data from a South African trial scuppered the hopes of winning marketing approval for Amelorad, for use with cancer radiotherapy. Tarabetic, a treatment for the nerve damage caused by diabetes, also failed to win approval.

Even in lipid biology — Scotia's main focus under Dr Horrobin — Dr Dow said the company would have "to go back to the drawing board", delaying further fat-based drug candidates for up to five years.

Scotia was formerly one of the UK's largest biopharmaceutical firms but its shares have crashed from 700p to 105½p since 1997. Dr Dow has cut staff numbers from 420 to 250 and is basing his recovery plan on Foscan and Olibra, a diet food ingredient being developed by St Ivel and General Mills, the large US food company.

Dr Dow, who while at Roche was responsible for developing Xenical, the fast-selling obesity drug, plans to turn a synthetic or semi-synthetic version of Olibra into a pharmaceutical — which would enhance the value of Scotia's "satiety technology".

Scotia also plans this year to begin development of another light-activated drug, related to Foscan, which will allow it to treat ovarian and liver cancers. Foscan will be filed with regulators in September.

The company is using its lipid expertise to help Roche reformulate one of its marketed, but poorly absorbed, drugs. Dr Dow hopes to win similar drug delivery deals this year.

Genghis Lloyd-Harris, biotech analyst at Credit Suisse First Boston, acknowledged Scotia's progress but is concerned that Foscan, as a palliative treatment, will struggle to command a good price. He believes that Olibra's potential is "nebulous" and that the General Mills deal will produce royalties of only "a few million".

Losses fell from £20.7 million to £18.6 million in 1998, helped by an £8.6 million one-off profit on the sale of the Efamol nutritional business.

Sales rise at radio group

INDEPENDENT Radio Group, the Wigan company that controls commercial radio stations in Scotland and the North West, yesterday reported a 10 per cent rise in sales for 1998 to December 31 to £3.9 million (Chris Ayres writes). Losses were reduced from £2.8 million to £2.5 million. Losses per share fell from 15.5p to 13.5p.

The company, which recently disposed of its Radio Mercury subsidiary in the South East, also said it had strengthened its board by appointing Emap's Barbara Gardner as sales director. The company said: "With the benefit of the new structures and management, we look forward to a successful year." The company is again passing payment of a dividend.

ANTHONY UPTON

Alastair Deakin, left, Hewden Stuart's finance director, and Alistair Napier, chief executive, unveiling results yesterday

Hewden Stuart disappoints

SHARES in Hewden Stuart fell yesterday after the crane and plant hire company reported annual results weaker than City analysts had expected (Adam Jones writes).

The group, based in Glasgow, reported pre-tax profits of £41.3 million for its year to January 31, up from £38.6 million the previous year. Earnings per share rose nearly 5 per cent, to 10.5p, but analysts had been expecting about 11p. The shares dipped from 146p to 134½p, undermining a recent rally.

Sales fell from £296.3 million to £279.7 million, reflecting disposals made during the year. Hewden Stuart received £15 million for a variety of businesses, including its merchandising arm and Scottish quarries, but booked a loss of £0.8 million on the deals.

Hewden Stuart now has about 240 tool hire shops, about 60 less than HSS, the UK market leader. It will continue to expand in the South of England, away from its traditinal base in Scotland and the North of England. The group said that it is cautiously optimistic on current-year trading. Alistair Napier, chief executive, said interest rate cuts had restored confidence, except in manufacturing.

A 2.75p final dividend makes a total of 3.95p (3.6p).

Tempus, page 28

Bell says Net is 'next big thing'

By Robert Lea

E-COMMERCE and website design are the next big things in corporate communications, according to Lord Bell, the public relations executive who runs Chime Communications.

Lord Bell, reporting a 21 per cent rise in earnings per share to 4.6p for 1998, said the group would continue its policy of looking for businesses that increase the range of services that it can offer its customers.

Software development for corporate websites on the Internet and advice to clients on e-commerce strategies are areas that Lord Bell said Chime would be investing in.

Pre-tax profits more than doubled to £8.3 million last year on the back of a first full-year inclusion of HHCL, the advertising agency. HHCL enabled Chime to lift group operating margins to 16 per cent, up from 13 per cent.

In comparison, Bell Pottinger, its public relations agency, was much flatter. Its operating profits were up by just £28,000 on the year at £3.45 million with margins at 11.5 per cent, though Lord Bell said the figure came after £750,000 spent on rebranding the business (formerly known as Lowe Bell) and website costs.

A final 1.52p dividend gives a total of 2.22p, up 17 per cent.

Power firms to fund green fuel

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

POWER COMPANIES face a shake-up in the way green energy is funded as the burden is removed from the consumer and passed to parts of the industry.

At present renewable energy is funded through a 0.5 per cent levy on energy bills. But new plans from the Government will shift the funding to either supply companies or distribution businesses.

The reforms are part of a drive to boost green energy to 10 per cent of electricity supply by 2010, which will be helped by extra government cash. The Government will raise its green energy budget from £11.1 million to £18 million a year in three years. There will also be tax breaks for research and development work on renewable forms of energy such as wind farms and solar and wave power. At present renewable energy is just 2 per cent of power.

John Battle, Energy Minister, said that the initiative was fundamental to Britain's ability to meet greenhouse gas targets and also to put the country in a strong worldwide position in green energy development.

The switch in funding is intended to share responsibility for funding green energy as the industry is changed by competition, bringing in new companies.

Highland Distillers toasts £200m venture

By Robert Lea

HIGHLAND Distillers is to team up with Remy Cointreau of France and the US group Jim Beam Brands in a €300 million (£200 million) joint venture to market and distribute its brands around the world.

The alliance will see brands such as The Famous Grouse and The Macallan Scotch whiskies marketed through a single global distribution company alongside the likes of Remy Martin cognac, Jim Beam bourbon and Piper-Heidsieck champagne. The venture will cover all big markets outside the US. Each of the partners will be putting €100 million into the venture.



Brian Ivory, left, and finance director Jamie Wilson hailed deal

Brian Ivory, Highland's chairman called the deal a "win-win-win" arrangement which will significantly reduce costs and increase sales.

Highland yesterday reported pre-tax profits in the six months to the end of February down by 6 per cent to £23.5 million.

The interim dividend rises to 2.3p (2.2p).

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Investors seek to oust CSG chiefs

INSTITUTIONAL investors are seeking to oust five directors of Corporate Services Group after the employment services company issued its second profits warning this month. Schroder Investment Management, Mercury Asset Management and M&G Investment Management, which together own 31.59 per cent of CSG, called for a special meeting of shareholders to try to force through its proposed board changes.

CSG yesterday cut its forecast for 1998 profits before tax, interest, amortisation of goodwill and exceptional items to about £20 million. As recently as March 8 it had forecast flat profits of £33.5 million, well below market expectations. The dissident investors, who need approval from investors with more than half CSG's shares, want to appoint Michael Davies, Gilles Avenel and Peter Button. They want to remove Jeffrey Fowler, chairman, and the directors John Abrahamson, Ralph Hulbert, Tim Holland-Bosworth and Ronald de Young. CSG shares fell 6½p to 71p. They set a 12-month high of 262p last June, and were 166p just before the March 8 profit warning.

Cussins Property flat

CUSSINS PROPERTY, the residential and commercial property group based in the North East of England, made unchanged pre-tax profits of £3.25 million in 1998 on turnover that rose to £38.5 million, from £34.1 million. Earnings fell to 12.8p a share, from 13.1p. The total dividend is increased to 4.715p a share, from 4.51p, with a 3.015p final. The company said that it achieved a 17 per cent increase in average selling prices with, for the first time, the average price exceeding £100,000, at £107,000. Turnover from commercial development activities rose to £2.9 million, from £1.9 million.

Bank One cuts jobs

AMERICA'S Bank One says that it is cutting up to 4,700 jobs, about 5 per cent of its workforce, as it completes integration of operations of First Chicago NBD. Bank One, which merged with First Chicago NBD in October in an all-share deal worth $20.71 billion (£13 billion) said in a report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission that it would cut 4 to 5 per cent of the combined 94,000 workforce that the company had last September. Bank One took a merger-related $984 million restructuring charge in the fourth quarter, and the report says that it will take a $536 million charge this year.

PowderJect positive

POWDERJECT PHARMACEUTICALS has announced more positive results from the DNA vaccine for hepatitis B that it is developing with Glaxo Wellcome as part of a collaboration potentially worth $300 million (£185 million). The Oxford company said that the powdered vaccine, delivered by its supersonic drug gun, stimulated a cellular response from the body's immune system in addition to stimulating the production of protective antibodies already reported. PowderJect's shares closed 5p down at 895p, compared with a low last year of less than 200p.

Hepworth halts deal

HEPWORTH, the building materials company, has abandoned plans to acquire two drainage pipe companies after the proposed acquisition was referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Kim Howells, Competition and Consumer Affairs Minister, yesterday said that the proposed acquisition of Naylor Drainage and Naylor Plastic raised competition concerns in respect of the market for the supply of clay drainage pipes in the UK. Hepworth said that the referral implied a delay of at least four months in completing the deal, creating uncertainty for employees and customers.

Huntleigh ahead

HUNTLEIGH TECHNOLOGY, the supplier of medical equipment, lifted its 1998 pre-tax profits to £14.36 million, from £11.49 million. The company enjoyed the benefit of an increase in expenditure by the National Health Service. Earnings rose to 11.9p a share, from 10.38p. A final dividend of 1.95p lifts the total to 3.5p, from 3.1p. The shares responded with a rise of 3½p to 285p yesterday. Profits were ahead despite a £1 million loss on adverse currency movements. More than 50 per cent of Huntleigh's turnover of £101 million was derived from exports.

Oriental gives warning

ORIENTAL RESTAURANT GROUP, the purveyor of Far Eastern and Indian cuisine to City of London workers, saw its shares fall 16½p to 137½p yesterday as the company gave warning that it would not meet its full-year profits forecasts of £1.8 million for the financial year that closes today. The company, best known in the Square Mile for its Imperial City and Sri Siam outlets, said that the opening of its new Pacific Oriental flagship in Bishopsgate in the autumn had exceeded projected operating costs. The shares, down 14 per cent on the day, have come off last summer's highs of 355½p.

Barlows pegs payout

BARLOWS, the property investment and development group based in the North West, is leaving its total dividend unchanged at 2.5p a share, with a maintained 1.7p final, after suffering a fall in 1998 pre-tax profits to £1.25 million, from £2.2 million in 1997. There was an exceptional charge of £318,000 arising from the proposed merger with Trafford Park Estates, a rival property company also based in the North West, that did not proceed. At the year end Barlows had a net asset value of 72p a share, down from 76p a year earlier. The shares rose 3p to 65½p.

Peterhouse advances

PETERHOUSE, the specialist contracting and safety service group, announced a rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £3.1 million, compared with £1.3 million in 1997. Earnings per share rose 26 per cent to 13.1p, and the total dividend is increased by 21.6 per cent to 4.5p with a 2.4p final. The shares rose 4½p to 132½p yesterday. Turnover rose to £68.1 million, from £26.8 million. At the year end Peterhouse announced an agreed bid for Jackson Group that will lead to the creation of a new civil engineering division within the enlarged group.

Hamleys to end Debenhams link

By Martin Barrow

HAMLEYS, the toy retailer, is set to sever its ties with Debenhams because of poor trading at its 48 House of Toys in-store concessions.

The House of Toys agreement ends next February, and discussions between Hamleys and Debenhams about the future of the partnership will take place shortly.

However, yesterday Chris Ash, the Hamleys chief executive, said the group would substantially reduce the number of House of Toys concessions this year. In 1998 the concession operation suffered a 15 per cent fall in like-for-like sales and saw profits fall to £300,000 (£700,000).

Hamleys, of which Howard Dyer is chairman, reported a fall in group pre-tax profits to £6.4 million last year (£7.6 million). Earnings fell to 20.1p a share (22p).

Mr Ash admitted that the company had suffered "a disappointing year". Trading was unlikely to materially improve in the first half of the current year as a £4 million refurbishment of its flagship Regent Street store in London depresses sales.

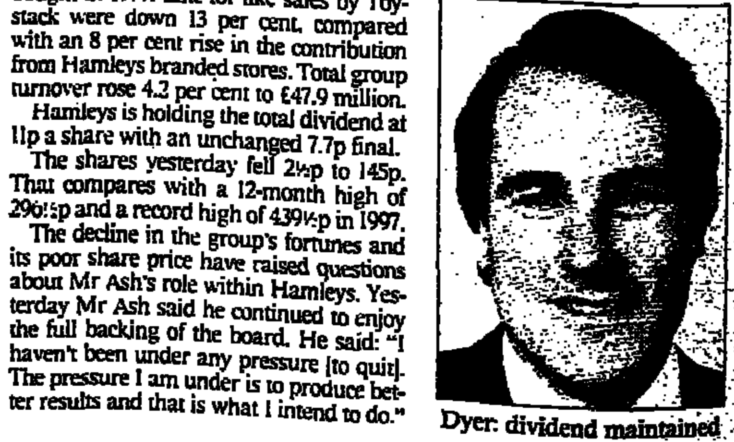
The building work started in February and will end in June. Hamleys is reconfiguring the ground floor to reduce congestion and improve access to the basement. Mr Ash said building work would be completed in time to support a strong build-up to the crucial Christmas season.

Hamleys has also suffered problems integrating Toystack, the retailing business bought in 1997. Like-for-like sales by Toystack were down 13 per cent, compared with an 8 per cent rise in the contribution from Hamleys branded stores. Total group turnover rose 4.2 per cent to £47.9 million.

Hamleys is holding the total dividend at 11p a share with an unchanged 7.7p final.

The shares yesterday fell 2½p to 145p. That compares with a 12-month high of 296½p and a record high of 439½p in 1997.

The decline in the group's fortunes and its poor share price have raised questions about Mr Ash's role within Hamleys. Yesterday Mr Ash said he continued to enjoy the full backing of the board. He said: "I haven't been under any pressure [to quit]. The pressure I am under is to produce better results and that is what I intend to do."



Dyer: dividend maintained

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
ACM INVESTMENTS LTD				
0171 470 0100				
Shod Dur Gilt	139.20	140.80	+ 0.10	
US Govt Bd (US$)	0.8468	0.8553	- 0.05	...
Gilt Income	55.19	56.05†	...	5.40
Gilt Growth	100.50	102.20		
Sterling Bond	56.09	57.09†	- 0.02	5.50
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7000				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	147.76	157.46	+ 0.37	
-do- NAV to Jan 19	145.58	145.58		
UK Equity Safeguard	118.52	126.77	- 0.21	3.18
-do- NAV to Mar 19	116.050	116.0506		
US Eqy Safeguard	97.28	103.36	- 0.01	
Cash	955.97	960.76		6.25
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	444.48	472.63	+ 5.30	1.22
UK Small Cos	96.38	103.86	+ 0.19	0.35
FTSE 250 Index	111.94	119.73	+ 0.37	1.95
Geared UK Index	#25.488	#25.816	+ 0.44	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	87.91	90.86	- 0.07	5.78
Monthly Inc	44.21	47.29†	+ 0.16	6.53
International Funds				
American Gen	393.27	415.61	+ 7.52	...
American Strat	181.30	193.43	+ 5.63	
JG US Index	#30.756	#32.405	+ 0.12	4.50
European Gen	436.09	461.11	+ 8.07	0.09
European Strat	206.00	220.44	+ 2.45	
Japan Gen	117.83	124.51	+ 0.57	...
Asia Pacific	68.00	78.45	+ 0.92	1.79
Pacific Strat	95.35	101.97	+ 0.86	...
Greater China	161.42	172.64	+ 3.29	...
Latin America	67.63	72.16	+ 1.21	
Intl Growth	201.00	214.47	+ 2.92	...
Balanced Exempt	187.39	194.19		
Global Strategy	50.73	54.25	+ 0.40	...

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD				
01707 622 100				
Cnr Gen Dist	332.30	352.20	+ 4.00	0.95
-do- Income Dist	182.36	193.20	+ 1.20	2.58
-do- Accum	657.70	685.30	+ 4.30	2.56
Gilt & Fxd Int	47.73	50.15†	+ 0.07	4.30
Growth Units	401.80	428.80	+ 4.80	1.09
Bond	202.50	213.50†	- 0.10	5.20
Intl Growth	279.70	297.10	+ 4.10	0.11
North American	444.30	471.50	+ 9.20	...
Far East	177.80	198.20	+ 0.50	0.91
UK Smaller Cos	294.40	314.90	- 0.90	1.08
European	135.90	144.30	+ 1.20	0.14
Japanese Growth	33.69	35.69†	+ 0.38	
High Income	313.20	334.90†	+ 2.10	2.63
CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD				
0181 831 7433 Enq 0181 831 7433 Dlg 0181 831 7400				
American & Gen	388.40	410.99†	+ 8.20	..
European Inc	150.70	159.90	+ 0.90	
Smaller Cos (4-1)	119.50	127.20†	- 0.30	1.96
Growth	780.50	839.40†	+ 6.80	1.81
Income & Growth #	622.70	662.50†	+ 4.40	4.21
-do- Accum #	1032.60	1097.90	+ 7.30	4.21
Japan & Gen	59.29	62.85†	- 0.26	
Hallmark Gwth	1781.00	1856.00	+18.00	0.86
-do- Accum	2287.00	2382.00	+24.00	0.86
Special Sits	179.80	191.10	+ 1.50	1.01
High Yield	2045.00	2109.00	+13.00	3.57
CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
0171 606 0708				
Cazenove Portfolio	127.04	135.05		2.13
American Portfolio	205.45	218.56	+ 0.31	0.37
European Portfolio	217.49	231.45	+ 2.47	0.27
High Income	58.45	62.67		5.67
Japanese Portfolio	55.02	58.17†	+ 0.06	..
Pacific Portfolio	109.44	117.68	+ 0.52	1.24

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
JUPITER UT MGRS LTD				
0171 581 3020				
Income #	338.89	360.51	+ 0.54	3.08
UK Growth	127.15	135.25	+ 0.26	1.15
Ecology	130.95	139.29	+ 0.42	0.31
European	306.85	325.67	+ 6.14	0.19
Far Eastern	339.00	360.52	+ 1.80	..
UK Special Sits	78.33	83.54	+ 0.36	0.24
Fd of Inv Tsts	62.47	66.62	+ 0.44	..
High Income #	71.88	76.67	+ 0.27	3.81
Financial Opps	82.37	87.85	+ 0.33	0.68
Growth & Income #	57.43	61.24	+ 0.31	2.12
Global Opps	59.18	63.05†	+ 0.62	0.70

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
UK Growth	1655.30	1750.50	+17.10	1.38
-do- Accum	1897.90	2007.00	+19.80	1.39
M&G UNIT MANAGERS LTD				
Dealing: 01277 281 010 Enq: 01898 284 831				
European Growth	160.84	171.10	+ 1.15	0.39
Intl Bond	63.91	67.11	- 0.04	2.61
Intl Equity Growth	119.29	126.52	+ 1.38	0.30
N Amer Growth	225.44	238.98†	+ 4.98	0.25
Special Sits Growth	41.66	44.31†	+ 0.30	1.17
UK Growth	686.52	730.33	+ 6.02	1.55
-do- Accum	987.31	1050.32	+ 8.65	1.55

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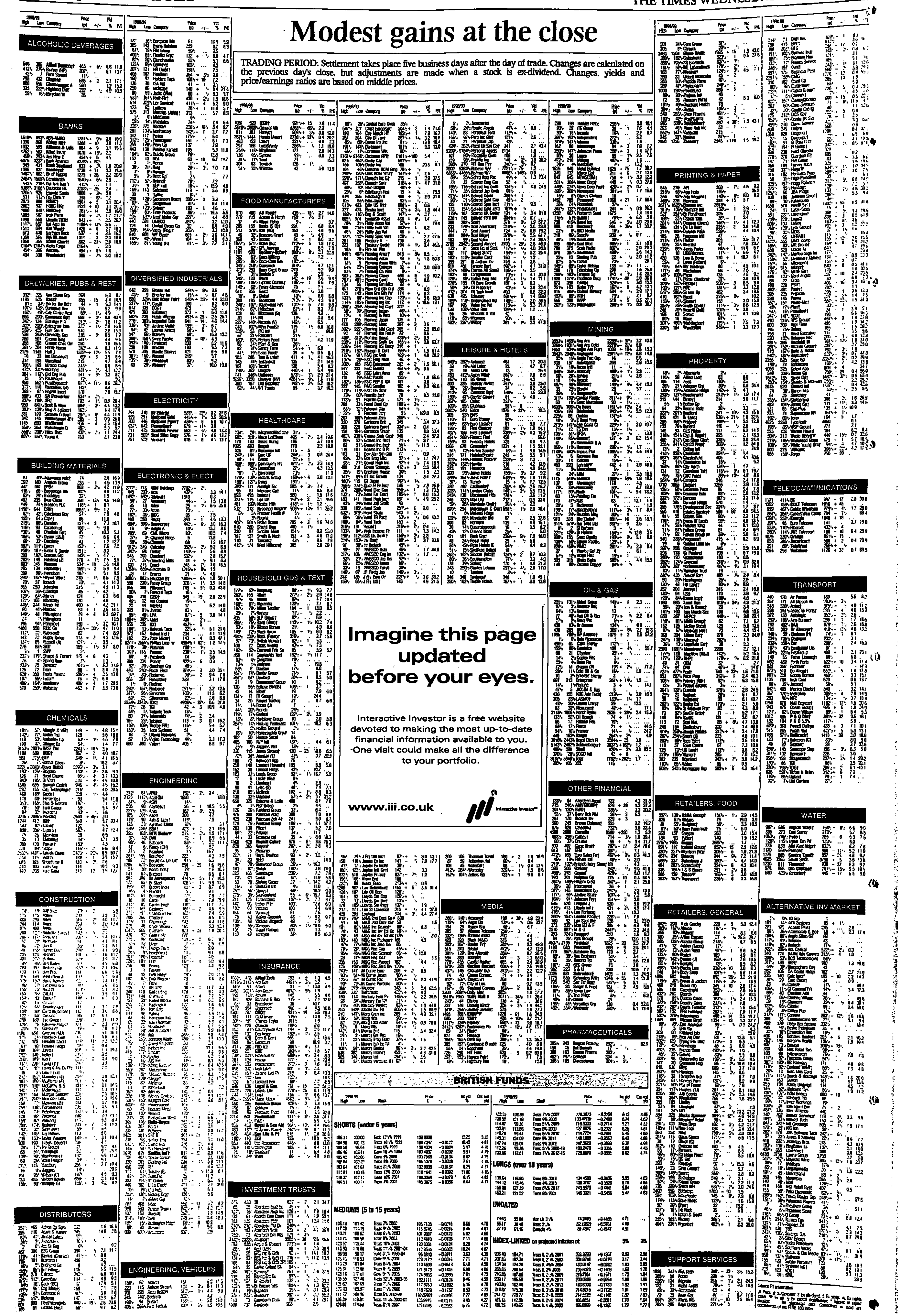
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	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
LAURENCE KEEN UNIT TRUST MGMT				
0171 600 0000				
Bridge Income #	410.52	436.72	+ 2.71	4.55
Esk Growth	149.27	158.80	+ 0.65	0.59
Inc & Growth #	105.33	112.05	+ 1.20	2.99
Smaller Cos	127.76	135.91	+ 0.36	1.43
Ever Spec Sit Inc	60.92	64.81	- 0.03	2.25
Ever Spec Sit Acc	65.70	69.89	- 0.04	2.25
Pennine Growth	60.79	64.67	+ 0.23	1.37
LAZARD UNIT TST MGRS LTD				

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
MW JOINT INVESTORS LTD				
Balanced Fd #	1582.90	1608.40†	...	2.80
Income #	1300.30	1320.60†	...	3.80
WALDON UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0191 222 4242				
Waldon General	214.40	219.20	...	2.85
MAREX INVESTMENT MGMT LTD				



Modest gains at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1998/99 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
646	385	Allied Domecq†	465	+ 6½	6.8	11.8
412½	279½	Bulmer (HP)	307½	.	6.1	13.7
42½	7	Burn Stewart	11½	..		
795	432	Diageo†	686	+ 2	2.7	17.1
900	550	Glenmorangie A	560		3.2	15.2
325	222½	Highland Dist	232	+ ½	4.9	10.9
58½	18½	Marydan W	26	...	...	..

BANKS

1998/99 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1618½	893½	ABN-AMRO	1281¼	+ 9¾	3.0	16.0
1390	860	Abbey Natl†	1268	− 10	3.0	17.5
1032	585	Alliance & Leic	864	+ 9	3.1	15.5
1262½	587½	Allied Irish†	1070	+ 13½	2.2	
458½	293½	Ans New Z	454¼	+ 5	4.5	
6075	3237½	Bank America	4378¾	+ 62½		
949	431	Bank Scotland	833	+ 3½	1.6	20.9
1996	827	Barclays†	1739	+ 31	3.3	19.5
1487½	882½	Bk of Ireland	1275	+ 26	2.2	20.9
2484½	1565½	Commerzbk	1840¾	+ 6½	2.9	..
543½	218½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	412½	...	1.1	
5369½	3106½	Deutsche Bk	3353½	− 25	2.4	..
1206½	925	Espirito Santo	1000	+ 3½	3.9	
531	112½	Fuji Bank Y	355	− 6½	1.2	
2073	980	HSBC†	1961	+ 5	3.1	20.4
2002	907	HSBC HK†	1930	+ 10	3.1	20.2
1000	648½	Halifax†	761½	− 14	2.9	16.0
1065	587	Irish Perm	940	+ 2½	1.7	27.2
1090	565	Lloyds TSB†	943½	+ ½	2.5	26.7
1117½	667	Nat Aust Bk	1108½	+ 13½	3.6	..
1512	694	Nat West†	1426	+ 6	2.7	18.3
673	440	Northern Rock	507	− 4	2.6	16.2
1368	561	Ryl Bk Scot	1311	− 3	2.3	18.8
[illegible]						

1998/99 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
122	36½	European Mo	64		11.9	5.9
305	143	Evans Halshaw	259		8.2	8.3
87½	39½	File Group	59½		2.5	
400½	85½	Firstfast Grp†	132	+ ½	8.0	4.7
82½	50½	Glencheston	52½		5.1	6.6
135½	89½	Cowings	103½	...	4.3	
207½	121	HR Owen†	158½		7.1	
405	187	Headlam	354	− 3½	2.6	..
160	97	Holders Tech	108½	+ 10	7.2	
120	30	IGA Ind	41	− 1	3.1	...
250	86	Inchcape	140	+ ½	8.4	21.4
80	55½	Jacks (Wm)	60	+ ½	8.3	3.7
583½	351½	Kwik-Fit	430	+ 2½	1.9	18.8
614	329½	Lex Service†	413½	− 4	5.2	9.0
123	62	Lookers	78½	+ 1	11.8	5.7
575	313	Menzies (John)†	313	...	5.7	8.3
5½	0½	Middlesex	0½			
29½	14½	Midstates	24½		2.4	6.4
326½	172	Norbain	236½	+ 16½	5.4	9.7
281	134½	Northamber	142½	+ 1	3.7	7.7
342	117	Patco	175½		6.4	
312½	125½	Pendragon†	161	+ 1	8.1	7.3
255	120½	Perry Gp	137		7.9	
443	138	Premier Farnell	195		5.3	11.9
164½	62½	Quicks Group	76½		12.3	
152	40	REA	60	+ 10	6.7	14.7
3	1½	Reece	1½	− ½		
38½	21½	Ring	28½	− 3½	7.0	7.8
3½	0½	Ronson	1		..	
5½	2½	Ross Gp	2½			7.7
117½	57½	Ryland†	70½		7.2	
31½	9	SLP Ind	10½	+ ½	15.9	4.8
165½	113	Salehurst	119	− 1	5.6	8.9
30	3	Salter	6½			
290	128½	Sanderson Bramt	205½	− 2	3.3	
67½	35	Sedgemoor	41½		6.4	11.4
273½	123½	Symer†	183	− 1	4.6	..
195½	83½	Time Products	86½	...	15.3	6.5
235	132½	Trust Motor Gp	227½		1.4	4.0
440	280	UMECO	287½		3.2	12.0
124	14	United Oseas Gp	22	..	6.8	4.9
308½	164½	Vardy (Reg)†	303½		3.3	10.8
840	600	WF Elect†	805	+ 2½	3.6	14.1
192½	62½	Wyatt	104	− 1	4.0	8.5
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BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

CONSTRUCTION

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

[illegible]

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

[illegible]

ELECTRICITY

[illegible]

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

[illegible]

ENGINEERING

[illegible]

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

[illegible]

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

[illegible]

INSURANCE

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS

[illegible]

MEDIA

[illegible]

MINING

[illegible]

OIL & GAS

[illegible]

OTHER FINANCIAL

[illegible]

PHARMACEUTICALS

[illegible]

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

[illegible]

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

[illegible]

LONGS (over 15 years)

[illegible]

UNDATED

[illegible]

INDEX-LINKED

[illegible]

PRINTING & PAPER

[illegible]

PROPERTY

[illegible]

RETAILERS, FOOD

[illegible]

RETAILERS, GENERAL

[illegible]

SUPPORT SERVICES

[illegible]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

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TRANSPORT

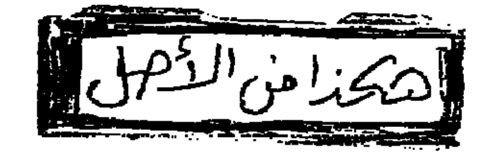
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WATER

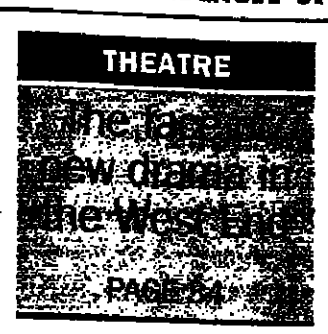
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ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

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THE TIMES
ARTS

POP
Steve Earle in devilish good form
PAGE 36



VISUAL ART: Richard Cork celebrates the art of Rogier van der Weyden on the 600th anniversary of his birth



One of the greatest works of Western religious art: five of the nine panels that make up Rogier van der Weyden's *Last Judgment*, originally positioned high on the chapel wall in Beaune's Hôtel-Dieu, in full view of the "poor invalids"

Judged his masterpiece

No biblical subject is more fearsome than the Last Judgment, and hospital patients today would never be expected to confront it from their sickbeds. But Nicholas Rolin, a 15th-century Chancellor of the Duchy of Burgundy, decided that the Hôtel-Dieu he had founded for "poor invalids" at Beaune would contain an altarpiece on this harrowing theme. He approached Rogier van der Weyden, a highly esteemed master based in Brussels, to tackle the subject for the hospital chapel. The outcome, Rogier's largest and most elaborate surviving work, was probably completed in 1451 when the chapel was officially dedicated. And now, in the sixth centenary of his birth, it seems appropriate during Easter week to see how he produced one of the greatest Last Judgments in Western art.

Still preserved in the Hôtel-Dieu, Rogier's painting was once positioned startlingly close to the hospital's ailing occupants. The chapel stood at the end of a monumental hall, the Salle des Pauvres, where inmates' beds were placed carefully enough to guarantee patients a view of the awesome work provided for their contemplation.

Rolin insisted on exposing his invalids to a high altarpiece that does nothing to minimise the fate meted out to sinners on Judgment Day. The God who presides with such commanding authority over the central panel wears an expression of uncompromising melancholy. Although the Latin inscription on the left side of God declares "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world", the other side carries a far more vehement message: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels". The sky is irradiated with an apocalyptic glow, and neither God nor Saint Michael beneath intends to be deflected from his duties.

Like his divine master, the saint stares directly out of the picture as he weighs two naked figures on scales bearing the words "virtues" and "sins" respectively. The virtuous soul is raised higher than his erring counterpart, who reacts with horror as he sinks towards the region of the damned. Four angels reinforce the momentousness of the task by blowing vigorously on trumpets so elongated that two of them extend into the side panels.

The occupants of the hospital beds would have found nothing to comfort them in the right half of the altarpiece, where naked sinners cower and weep as they wander across a barren landscape towards hell. One figure thrusts up a beseeching arm towards the circle of saints above, who raise their hands in acknowledgement of the terror awaiting the damned. A hapless woman is tugged violently downwards by her hair, while her companions scream with anguish as they plummet to their doom.

Rogier reserves the full horror of divine retribution for the outermost panel, where the saints are represented only by the tail-end of some crimson drapery. The heavenly clouds move to one side, and reveal a terminal blackness envenomed by flames erupting viciously from the rocks below. Into this inferno tumble the howling victims of God's displeasure, their flesh already ignited in places by the heat that will perpetually assail them.

Might the patients have felt unduly distressed by the immediacy and frankness of *The Last Judgment*? Rogier's main composition would have been familiar to them from the Gothic tympanum reliefs that provided him with precedents. The truth is that citizens of 15th-century Europe were accustomed to surveying images of the harrowing of Hell. Such visions could be found in the stained-glass windows embellishing medieval churches, and religious education necessitated prolonged meditation on the significance of the Dies Irae. It was regarded as a salutary experience, and many of the invalids in the Salle des Pauvres might even have found comfort when they gazed at Rogier's masterpiece. Looking up in prayer at the terror confronting the people God rejected, they may well have been prompted to conclude that their own plight entailed less suffering. Besides, they undoubtedly appreciated their proximity to the chapel, for religious feelings were at their most heightened among those confronted by the prospect of death.

Moreover, if patients had already made peace with their God, they would probably identify more with the optimistic scenes on the other side of *The Last Judgment*. For here, aided by the intercession of the Virgin seated at the rainbow's base, humanity approaches the full redemptive grace of a Christian Heaven. Even though Rogier invests their attenuated bodies with as much northern vulnerability as their counterparts in Hell, they emerge from their graves with an unmistakable sense of wonder. One woman is so eager to kneel and offer thanks to God that she has to be coaxed gently towards Paradise by a companion whose foot has already crossed over a frame into the next panel. Resurrecting figures are still emerging from the cracked earth even there, but only a few steps are needed to reach the ministering attentions of a guardian angel at the gates of Heaven, where the entrance columns are embellished with ripe grapes.

The contrast between the gleaming gold architecture of this panel, and the flame-filled void at the other end of *The Last Judgment*, could hardly be more poignant. While the penumbral depths promise nothing but despair and excruciating torment, the Gothic archway leading to Heaven offers shelter, light and aesthetic magnificence.

However much sustenance the patients may have derived from such an imposing painting, though, Rogier's vision is undeniably solemn. His stern emphasis on the ultimate moment either of absolution or retribution has an awesome finality, and on the outer wings his donor portraits likewise assume expressions of the utmost gravity. Identifiable from their coats of arms, each held by an angel floating behind, Chancellor Rolin and his wife Guigone de Salins pray before devotional texts. Rolin died ten years after the consecration of the Beaune chapel at the reputed age of 86, and Guigone retired to Beaune. Eight years later she died at the Hôtel-Dieu, and was buried according to her wishes before the altar where *The Last Judgement* was displayed. In her eyes, then, it must have offered the positive hope of salvation to come.

● *L'Hôtel-Dieu, Beaune (00 33 03 80244500). A small exhibition, including several of Rogier's other paintings, is in Room 1 of the National Gallery (0171-839 3321) until July 4*

John Russell Taylor reviews a revealing new V&A show of treasures from the sub-continent

Sikhs in splendour

The European preoccupation with the physical age of things can be a great impediment to our appreciation of much Asian art. Of course, incomprehension can be advantageous. How many visitors who go into ecstasies over Bangkok temple architecture realise that it is all 19th-century, and seen in any other context would probably be dismissed as Victorian pinchbeck?

Most of the art on show at the Victoria and Albert Museum in *The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms* is little (if at all) older. After all, the Sikh kingdoms of the Punjab were a 19th-century creation, lasting only from the proclamation of Ranjit Singh as the first Sikh Maharaja of the Punjab in 1801 to the annexation of the Punjab by Britain in 1849. If we are looking for objects that are cherishable primarily because of their antiquity, we shall be disappointed.

On the other hand there is much to admire in a long tradition so closely yet creatively maintained. In much Eastern architecture what we are admiring is akin to W.G.Grace's original cricket bat — which stayed with him all his life, even though it had numerous replacements of blade and handle. Similarly, in the Orient rotten wood is replaced and flaking mural repainted whenever necessary, but the essential remains.

Even the most famous Sikh monument in the Punjab — the Golden Temple, or Harmandir, at Amritsar — is the end product of many enlargements and enrichments. But if the structure we see is fairly new, the idea behind it goes right back to the foundation of Sikhism as we know it with Guru Gobind Singh's initiation of his nearest disciples into the Khalsa (Order of the Pure) 300 years ago.

Does the Harmandir take us close to the centre of Sikh art? Not exactly. Indeed, it is doubtful if such a thing as specifically Sikh art exists at all. The Sikh court in Lahore was more of a meeting place of cultures than a standard-bearer for any particular culture. At the V&A the preliminary rooms concern themselves with the arts in 17th and 18th-century Lahore, and therefore with Mogul culture. Much of the miniature painting is highly refined, with a typical Mogul mixture of rich materials and discretion in their use.

But the political rise of the Sikhs unfortunately coincided with the decline of art generally in the sub-continent. Muslim and Hindu artists were both in evidence in Ranjit Singh's court. And it sometimes seems that Hindu taste, running to lurid colouring and an excess of ornamentation, was always threatening to oust the more austere art of the Moguls.

Sikh heyday: Order of Merit, Lahore c.1837-39

The vulgarisation may well also have something to do with European influence. There is a clear parallel between the progression from Regency elegance to mid-Victorian clutter in the work of visiting artists, and that from pure Mogul at the start of the century to the boiled-sweet style of the later court artists.

Even at its best, then, much Sikh art is hybrid. But then, much is very beautiful. Some of the jewellery and metalwork may be too ornate even for tastes habituated to High Victorian elaboration, and it is disappointing that art proves to take us no nearer to a full understanding of the Sikh faith. But the flowering of Sikh court culture, though late and brief, was no less impressive for that, and has much to offer, even to us, even now.

● *Victoria and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 (0171-938 8441) until July 25*

■ THEATRE

New life for an old stage

ARTS

■ OPERA

Smetana in the Bull Ring

Spoil us, Ambassadors

THEATRE: The Royal Court's temporary home has big plans, writes **Benedict Nightingale**

ADRIAN SHERRATT



Sonia Friedman of the Ambassador Theatre Group intends to storm in where conventional producers fear to tread

There is nothing critics enjoy more than a good moan about the West End, and, God knows, that grimy parish has given us plenty of cause for ritual ululation in the 1990s. Remember the time, just a few years ago, when every other show was a cut-rate cabaret celebrating the works of some dead songster? But suddenly, disconcertingly, we reviewers are having to change our tune. I can barely recall a time when those seemingly superannuated playhouses were more hospitable to bold drama and audiences with unconventional tastes.

The omens were there when, early last year, Patrick Marber's sharp, scathing *Closer*, Ben Elton's provocative *Popcorn*, Alan Ayckbourn's not-unserious *Things We do for Love* and the play by Mark Ravenhill with the unprintable name and daunting sexual content were clustered together in Shaftesbury Avenue's four prime theatres. Then the Almeida brought Racine and Gorky to the Albery, and Stoll Moss staged Theatre de Complicite's *Street of Crocodiles* at Queen's and transferred Michael Frayn's *Copenhagen* to the Duchess. And all along the Royal Court used its exile from Chelsea to present new plays at the Duke of York's and the Ambassadors.

But wait. The Court is packing its bags in readiness for the opening of its expensively renovated headquarters this autumn. Although Conor McPherson's *Weir* will continue its run at the Duke of York's, Mick Mahoney's *Sacred Heart* closes at the Ambassadors on April 24. Won't there be an awful gap at the theatre where the company has presented more than 30 new plays in 30 months? Won't there be a hole in the West End itself?

Quite the contrary. The Court has had what may well be a lasting impact on the West End's meteorology. It has shown the producers and theatre owners that audiences will come into the crowded centre of London and queue for returns to see plays without celebrity authors or star names propping them up: Martin McDonagh's *Beauty Queen of Leenane*, Richard Bean's *Toast*, Ayub Khan-Din's *East is East*, Nick Grosso's *Real Classy Affair* — and Ravenhill's unnamable study of rent-boy culture, which was at the Ambassadors before moving to the Queen's.

The Court can surely take some credit for the Oxford Stage Company's decision to transfer Robert Holman's *Making Noise Quietly* and Chekhov's *Three Sisters* to the Whitehall this spring and the determination of its director, Dominic Dromgoole, to ensure that other not-obviously-commercial work follows. Similarly with Stoll Moss's still-secret plan to do something very exciting in the West End this autumn. But the Court's success is clearly the key reason why, even after it has been restored to the commercial sector, the one-time home of *The Mousetrap* can be rechristened the New Ambassadors and continue to offer highly eclectic plays.

"I want to do the same sort of work, with the same integrity and values, that I did in the subsidised sector," says Sonia Friedman, who is the producer of the Ambassador Theatre Group and was the co-founder of Out of Joint, the company which joined the Court in staging Ravenhill's play and Caryl Churchill's brilliant *Blue Heart*. "This means commissioning and producing plays, inviting in touring troupes, and staging fringe or regional work that conventional London producers have found too risky; and limiting each run to four or six weeks."

Within a month of the Court's exit the Ambassadors should have lost its bizarre alterations — one stage in the old balcony, another in the cellarage — and got back its original auditorium. On April 24 Friedman opens *Holy Mothers*, a play about eccentric oldsters by Werner Schwab, and follows it with Frantic Assembly's latest mix of words, music and physical derring-do, *Sell Out*. Then comes Khan-Din's *Last Dance at Dum Dum*, about the Anglo-English in Calcutta; then Out of Joint with both Ravenhill's *Some Explicit Polaroids* and *Drummers*, Simon Bennett's first-time play about jewellery theft; then Shared Experience's adaptation of *Jane Eyre*. Future probabilities include *Arse* by Jim Cartwright, author of *Little Voice*, and a revival of the late Sarah Kane's horrifying *Blasted*.

Friedman wants to fill some slots so far ahead that touring companies can plan their peregrinations, but will leave others open, in the hope that this will bring Central London well-received plays that now disappear after brief runs in subsidised theatres. Bryony Lavery's *Frozen*, a three-hander about child murder much admired at Birmingham Rep last year, would be an obvious choice. "Some of the best work gets missed," says Friedman. "It's not fair on writers, performers, regional theatres or audiences."

Is it fiscally feasible? Since wages will be modest, marketing will be centralised and visiting shows will not need financing from scratch, Friedman thinks so. If she fills just over half the Ambassadors' 400 seats, its seasons should break even. But will it attract Cottesloe or Bush habitués? That is answered not only by the Court's record at the Ambassadors, but by Ravenhill's West End triumph. Morning after morning came with 500 seats still to sell, and night after night ended up sold out. "And the age of the audience was extraordinary — 23 or 24 on average," says Friedman.

Surely that's significant. With no seat more than £20, and some maybe as low as £10, the New Ambassadors should bring in cinemagoers and punters with a distaste for booking ahead, the casual, the carefree and the young. And if that's so, the future of commercial British theatre would seem less gloomy than the fatalists and critics like to claim.

Doing overtime in the fun factory

Daniel Rosenthal takes a tour of Robert Lepage's extraordinary multimedia arts headquarters in Quebec

A derelict fire station in Quebec City, on the banks of the Saint Lawrence River, has been transformed into a unique factory which imports artists and performers from North America and Europe and exports plays, films, operas and websites.

Some of the products take only a few weeks to manufacture, others evolve over several years, but they all bear the same hallmark: "Made in the mind of Robert Lepage".

The high walls of La Caserne have housed Lepage's company, Ex Machina, since 1997, although its first new products are only just reaching Britain. Lepage's low-budget feature film *Nô*, based on his epic play *Seven Streams of the River Ota*, which shuttles back and forth between Osaka and Montreal, goes on release early next month. And *Geometry of Miracles*, a three-hour devised piece spanning 30 years in the life of the visionary architect Frank Lloyd Wright, opens in Glasgow tomorrow, then moves to the National Theatre.

Opened in 1910, the old fire station had been abandoned for a decade when Quebec City's Mayor offered to let it to Ex Machina, and the £3 million conversion created a building tailor-made to the company's requirements. A quick tour with Ex Machina producer Michel Bernatchez takes you through offices, set workshops, rehearsal studios, dressing rooms, digital editing suites and a multimedia department, all situated around the studio space. At about 3,500 cubic metres this approximates to many of the international stages which receive Ex Machina shows, and doubles as a film studio.

Before settling at La Caserne, says Lepage, the members of Ex Machina were too widely dispersed, with temporary production offices all over the globe. Lepage spent months away from his home and colleagues in Quebec City whenever he took on a freelance directing job.

Now he asks overseas theatres to send over their actors, rehearses with them at La Caserne, then takes the production "home". That happened last year with a company from the Stockholm-based Swedish National Theatre, who flew in to work on *La Celestina* by Fernando de Rojas. "Actors who work for big institutional companies in Europe tell me that they don't normally have time to explore new approaches," says Lepage. "But we have a very different set of rules at La Caserne and the Swedes responded very well."

He wants La Caserne to be "a playground" for actors, musicians, singers, designers — anyone creative. Their contributions to one production should feed others, as is happening at the moment with Lepage's latest show, *Technological Cabaret*, scheduled to open in Switzerland in August. Visual artists from France and Austria have collaborated on installation-like revue pieces with actors from Quebec, and their work has directly influenced the structure of *Hotel*, a French-language drama series Lepage is developing for Canadian television.

Colleagues such as the multimedia specialist Veronique Couturier, who created the interactive *Nô* website (www.metamorphoses.sympatico.ca), enthuse about La Caserne's stimulating, inter-disciplinary environment. Jean Bourgault, the director of Mirage Multi-Media, a small firm which rents La Caserne's editing suites, relishes the freedom Lepage has given him to experiment on back projections for a recent Ottawa production of *The Tempest*, or animated sequences for a forthcoming play.

It sounds like an idyllic creative set-up — particularly since it should ease the problems posed by the logistical requirements of Ex Machina's numerous co-production partners. Lepage's work is so popular internationally that a remarkable 75 per cent of Ex Machina's operating budget has been provided by venues such as the National and Glasgow's Tramway.

These large theatres must fix deadlines months in advance, while Lepage thrives on collaborative methods in which shows develop "organically". "Bringing together Robert's way of working and our production partners' needs can be a nightmare," admits Bernatchez. "Last year, one European theatre had two weeks of downtime in its workshop because we were not able to send them set designs in time. They were paying their men to sit and smoke cigarettes.

"Our partners give us large sums of money and have high expectations, but we can end up with a catastrophe like *Elsinore* [the notorious occasion when a technical glitch forced the last-minute cancellation of Lepage's solo version of *Hamlet* at the 1997 Edinburgh Festival]."

Lepage agrees that Ex Machina "may not yet have the right balance" in its volume, but says the characteristic variety of its output should blossom in the next couple of years. "We've been neglecting the aura which creates the unpredictability in our work." That aura "needs to be nurtured in the proper environment", and at La Caserne, he believes, the environment is just about perfect.

● Nô *is released on April 9. A Robert Lepage season runs at the National Film Theatre (0171-928 3232) April 1-8.* Geometry of Miracles *is at three Glasgow venues from now until April 3 (0141-287 3900), then the Lyttelton Theatre (0171-452 3000) April 14-24*



Robert Lepage (left) and colleagues at work in La Caserne

Scoring tops for music

OPERA

The Two Widows
Birmingham

City of Birmingham Touring Opera has an excellent record for reaching those parts that other companies don't reach, but then it is easy to see why it does not hang around its home base: the Mayfair Suite of Birmingham's Bull Ring Centre is one of the country's most unprepossessing operatic venues. At least in CBTO's new production of *The Two Widows* the place is transformed by Jon Morrell's atmospheric set, evoking a small estate deep in the Czech countryside.

In spite of a polka-infused score, Smetana's fifth opera is the only one he drew from a non-Czech source (Mallefille's farce *Les Deux Veuves*). In Züngel's libretto, it tells the story of two widowed cousins, Karolina and Anezka, the latter guiltily mourning a husband she didn't love and so repressing her feelings for Ladislav, whose attempts at wooing provide comic diversion.

As in *The Bartered Bride*, Smetana eventually revised this opera by turning the spoken dialogue into recitative; he also added two minor characters to the original four, plus a chorus. CBTO's version cleverly goes back to the original structure. Since that dialogue is apparently no longer available, Graham Vick has provided his own, and it chimes in well with the singing translation of David Pountney and Leonard Hancock. Done this way, the work seems much lighter than it did in ENO's clodhopping production of a few seasons ago.

CBTO has an honourable tradition of performing works in reduced orchestrations, and this production's masterstroke lies in the music's arrangement for piano quintet. Christopher Willis's reduction brings to mind Smetana's invigorating chamber music and, more especially, the glorious Piano Quintet by Dvorák. It would be impossible to preserve all the orchestral excitement, and there were times when the playing, led by Willis from the piano, might have been better, but the tunes worked all their beguiling magic.

Not everything is on the same chamber scale. Vick's production is a little blunt, and involves some byplay with the musicians, who are seated on stage in period (in this case Edwardian) dress. Much of the singing is unsubtle, with the tenor (David Owen) in the difficult role of Ladislav apparently pitching for the upper gallery of Prague's National Theatre. The others sing less earsplittingly, though Kate Flowers's vivacious Karolina sounds squally. Beverley Mills provides a touching portrait of the confused Anezka, but Michael Druiett is too broad as the gamekeeper Mumlal. There's the framework here for a much more charming show.

JOHN ALLISON

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament: ALEX WILSON

Profession: Jazz pianist.

Age: 27.

Where can we hear him? On April 9 he leads his own band through its jazz-salsa paces at the Tabernacle, Notting Hill.

So he's got the Latin bug? Absolutely. He has just returned from Havana, where he recorded his second album for the distinctive London label, Candid. His debut, *Afro-Saxon*, added a salsa tinge to tunes like *Nature Boy* and attracted stirring reviews.

Why *Afro-Saxon*? It reflects his own heritage. His father, a former computer programmer with the UN, is of Sierra Leonian descent. As well as a brief early stay in the former colony, Wilson spent much of his childhood in Vienna and Geneva. He still regrets not having paid a visit to the Montreux Jazz Festival when he lived near by.



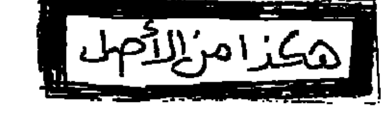
A citizen of the world then? "I'm not out to say I'm an African pianist. I know about Sierra Leone's culture, but more from talking to friends and family than from direct experience. I'm just trying to express a multicultural, mixed-race philosophy in my music. Cuba is a lot more at ease with that heritage than London."

Did he follow the usual academic path? No, he's self-taught, having started on classical guitar before taking up the piano in earnest at 17. After studying for an electronics degree at York University he began paying his dues in London clubs five years ago, and managed to get turned down for a place on the Guildhall jazz course.

So playing Latin music helped to pay the bills? Exactly. He eventually made his breakthrough on the jazz front when he joined Gary Crosby's award-winning Nu Troop.

What next? The new album is out at the end of the year, and he has been working on his business skills on a production course co-funded by the London Arts Board. "My main goal is just to stay focused. I've had to play all sorts of styles in the past, and it's still always tempting to do a bit of everything. And I want to make sure I keep fighting to find time for my piano-playing. It's as simple as that."

CLIVE DAVIS



DESIGN Oxford's new theatre

ARTS

CONCERTS Spotlight on the brass

ARCHITECTURE: Marcus Binney sees old and new blending perfectly in Oxford's Magdalen College extension

Marriage across the centuries

Architects who successfully rebel against the prevailing orthodoxy deserve attention. And few have done it more systematically than Demetri Porphyrios, whose classical theatre at Magdalen College, Oxford, has just opened, so pure and crisp it could stand comfortably in Ancient Athens.

It stands not in temple-like isolation, but embedded in a new college quadrangle that is hardly different from those built by Oxford masons 500 years ago. Porphyrios is not an apostle of formal classical design with its emphasis on symmetry, but a passionate believer in the English picturesque tradition, with its sense of informality and accretive growth. He connects not so much with Greek temple architecture as with the looser pattern of the Greek agora or marketplace.

> ‘The new Magdalen theatre is so pure and crisp it could stand comfortably in Ancient Athens’

His first principle is that "a building should not be as large as the commission". Put another way, an architect should respond to his brief not with one large building but with several smaller ones.

He also believes passionately that the old ways, not today's high-tech, offer the eco-friendly, low-energy approach. "High-tech architects go for steel and glass but look at the fuel burnt up in their manufacture and the energy consumed in air-conditioning glass buildings," he says.

The theatre provides a second entrance to the college off Longwall Street, looking straight into Magdalen's delightful deer park. This view is framed by an open octagonal entrance porch (a tribute to the ancient Temple of the Winds in Athens).

While Modernists express horror at copying the past, Porphyrios conscientiously seeks a precedent for everything he does. When I ask why mouldings are shaved away on the portals he replies: "You'll find it at Pergamon."

His Greek blood also shows in the joy at unbroken expanses of smooth stonework. An English architect, seeking to blend with Oxford tradition, might have run drip mouldings between the storeys, matching the college's 15th-century buildings.

The new 200-seat theatre (a double cube) is not a variant of the open-air Greek theatre with its tiers of curving seats, but of the Ancient Greek Odeion. These were small covered theatres for 200 to 300 people with steeply raked seats on three sides, allowing plays to be staged in the round. At Magdalen, where the theatre will be used mainly for lectures, the seats face the stage, though the front two rows can be set at right angles to create a sense of enclosure.

The college initially approached 14 architects but whittled the list down to a choice between Porphyrios and the "advanced Gothic" of Ian Ritchie, with exposed stainless steel rods and cast metal and stone façades. "The dons gave Ritchie, who also mightily impressed them, the commission for a sleek new building on the Magdalen Science Park outside Oxford," says Anthony Smith, the President of Magdalen. "Both the junior and the middle common rooms came out overwhelmingly in favour of Porphyrios. It seemed to me that some of my colleagues, torn by two radically different approaches, were influenced by the strength of the student preference." Porphyrios appealed, said Smith, because "he fully grasped the nature of the Oxford quadrangle with rooms opening off staircases, guarding privacy and creating a social unit."

By the time the new quadrangle is completed, it will have provided nearly 100 rooms and sets of rooms for students and tutors. Magdalen needs these rooms because the days of cheap student digs are over and, like other colleges, it feels obliged to offer full housing to both graduates and undergraduates. Comfortable accommodation (with en suite facilities) lets for much better rates to conferences in the vacations.

The theatre also serves as a recital room. "Oxford abounds in wonderful auditoriums that are excruciatingly uncomfortable," says Smith. "Every year we have one or two students who are serious performers."

Magdalen also hosts many special events. "Simon Callow launched his one-man Oscar Wilde show here. We have had Ian Bostridge, Britain's leading young tenor; Robin Blaze, the counter-tenor; and the cellist Lynn Harrell. Mark Milhofer, who sang in the college choir and is now singing in Italian opera houses, will perform in the new auditorium on May 14.

"I hope to do *Napoleon* with live music. We are also showing a series of films of Ancient Greek drama productions."

Undergraduate societies, vocal and instrumental groups can use the new theatre. The tall barrel-roofed foyer will be used for art exhibitions. "The idea is that the artists also show videos of their work in the theatre," adds Porphyrios.

The picturesque appeal of his design is heightened by the retention, within a few feet of the new buildings, of two magnificent trees. To avoid new foundations damaging the roots, Porphyrios carefully supported the corner of the building on a raft, irrigating the roots while construction proceeded.

More curious are the buttresses which he has inserted at angles in the corners between the theatre and the octagon. They look almost as if some stonework intended for the restoration of the college chapel has ended up here by mistake. Porphyrios will have none of it: "An entry is always framed by buttresses," he says, drawing the plan of a gateway into an Ancient Greek town. And round the corner, Magdalen's own belltower is there to prove him right.



A return to traditional architectural values: Demetri Porphyrios's new addition to Magdalen College, Oxford, with the classically inspired theatre on the left and the accommodation block on the right

A comprehensive blow-out

CONCERTS

The 1999 London International Brass Festival at the Royal Academy of Music offered everything from Black Dyke to Birtwistle, from jazzer Allen Vizzutti to the ubiquitous John Wallace, head of brass at the academy and co-director (with Philip Biggs) of the festival.

Among the repertoire were new works by both Birtwistle and Maxwell Davies. The title of the former's *Placid Mobile* for 36 trumpets gives notice that the piece exploits unconventional timbres of the instrument, even though it refers to Lake Placid in upstate New York, where Birtwistle was composer-in-residence in 1998. The atmosphere is indeed tranquil, with impressionistic clusters ranging from pianissimo to mezzo piano, against which streaks of tone are picked out.

As if the business of rounding up three dozen competent trumpeters (half were professionals, half students) were not difficult enough, the constraints on the instrument's natural propensities proved too great to deliver anything like a flawless performance. But Birtwistle relishes setting his players a challenge, as was revealed in a discussion about another new work, *Silkhouse Tattoo*, to be premiered next month. Scored for two trumpets and percussion, *Silkhouse Tattoo* employs innovatory techniques involving microtones and mutes, and has a potentially theatrical element deriving from the deployment around the stage of the two trumpeters. The preview of the finale given by John Wallace, Edward Carroll and Sam Walton suggested a more substantial piece than *Placid Mobile*.

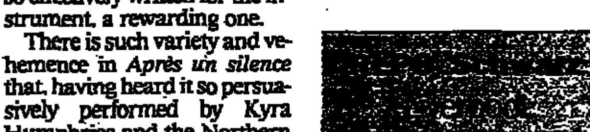
Wallace candidly admitted that life had been too short in the weeks since Maxwell Davies had presented him with *Litany for a Mind Chapel between Sheep and Shore* to master it in its entirety. He therefore gave just two of its 11 sections, standing offstage in a balcony from where the music's evocative melismas floated down.

Maxwell Davies's *Sea Eagle* swoops and soars similarly, giving the horn student Evgeny Chebykin a chance to show his mastery of such techniques. The Maxwell Davies Trumpet Sonata is an earlier piece, whose furious virtuosity was fearlessly dispatched by Christopher Deacon.

It had been thought that Victor Ewald's quintets were the earliest of their kind, but the newly discovered set by J.S. Bellon from the 1830s predates them by half a century. Their easygoing nature, heard in a pair led by Wallace on the keyed bugle, is what one might expect of pieces written for Parisian promenade concerts.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Silence to shout about



After a silence, it seems, eloquence. In its original version for violin and piano, John Casken's *Après un silence* was the first work he had completed in nine months. Whatever the reason for the silence, the release from it generates a surge of energy that is far from exhausted by the end: the last bars seem to have to impose a renewal of silence by cutting the violinist off in mid-flight.

Before conducting the new version of *Après un silence* for violin and chamber orchestra, Nicholas Kraemer chose to describe to the audience how it is divided into eight sections and, by means of tiny extracts from the score, how to identify them. It was a mistake, in terms of both presentation and explanation. The whole point of the work is that, although it is indeed constructed in eight sections, it is a compulsive continuity. Of course, there are changes in tempo and textural perspective, recitative alternating with song, vigorous volubility with lyrical reflection, but all of them stimulated by the same unfailing impulse. In that most of the energy is carried through the violinist it must be an unusually daunting solo role but also, since it is so effectively written for the instrument, a rewarding one.

There is such variety and vehemence in *Après un silence* that, having heard it so persuasively performed by Kyra Humphries and the Northern Sinfonia, it is difficult to imagine how it could have been contained in its original violin and piano form.

The French title, the French section headings, the French tempo and expression markings presumably reflect something of Casken's source of inspiration here. Anyway, in compiling the rest of the programme, Nicholas Kraemer took the hint, preceding the new work with Henri Büsser's deplorable but irresistible arrangement of Fauré's *Après un Rêve*, framing the whole thing in French Baroque and including two French classics.

The beginning of the first half, with empty ceremonial gestures from Lully and a heavy-footed reading of Ravel's *Pavane pour une Infante défunte*, was depressing. The ending of the second half, with its fascinating selection of movements from Rameau's *Les Boréades*, was correspondingly refreshing.

GERALD LARNER

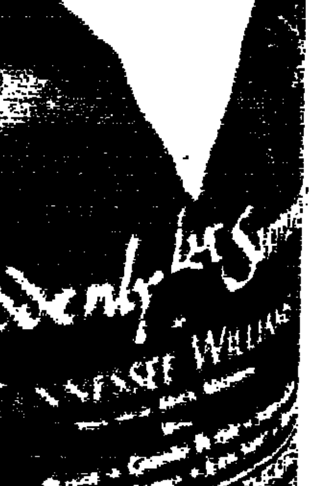
Into the comfort zone

It would be worth climbing a mountain with Richard Strauss to avoid being his house guest, *writes Gerald Larner*. But if it had to be the *Sinfonia Domestica* rather than the *Alpine Symphony* at the end of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's season of anniversary tributes to the composer, they could scarcely have made a better case for that squalling, argumentative, embarrassing and yet exhilarating slice of family life. Gerard Schwarz conducted it as though it really were a symphony, rather than a lapse in autobiographical taste, and succeeded in making his point.

Not the least impressive aspect of the Liverpool performance was the abundance of picturesque detail and the accomplishment of the orchestra in colouring it and phrasing it so expressively while at the same time balancing the textures with such consistent clarity. But no passing detail diverted the conductor from his symphonic mission. His long-term structural purpose was evident from the start and he sustained it with a rare combination of calculation, determination and inspiration. Having worked together in a variety of repertoire over two weeks, Schwarz and the RLPO clearly have faith in each other, which in an extremity like this is of immense value in securing a fearless and authoritative performance.

In a soloist that quality of unquestionable certainty is largely a matter of experience. While there is little room for doubt about his virtuoso accomplishment and his estimate of the expressive purpose of Bruch's Violin Concerto in G minor, Matthew Trusler still lacks something of the self-assertive presence that commands unfailing attention. There is also the question of the size of the violin sound. But less than a year after playing the same work in the Bridgewater Hall, in the smaller space and more direct acoustics of the Philharmonic Hall he seemed to have developed more than a little in authority. To judge by the generous reaction of the audience, he does not have far to go to achieve full-scale heroic stature.

Schwarz's arrangement for string orchestra of Webern's early and solitary *Slow Movement* for string quartet proved to be attractive in its scoring even if, by depriving it of its intimacy, it did nothing to enhance its emotional effect.







Kiri in Glasgow

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargle

LONDON

ENDLESS PARADE: The largest and last of Radio 3's festivals under the umbrella heading *Sounding the Century* surveys the diversity of post-war British music. For tonight's curtain-raiser Andrew Davis conducts the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus joined by the BBC Singers in a world premiere by Richard Causton followed by works by Britten, Birtwistle and Tippett. With the baritone Alan Opie, and Håkan Hardenberger, trumpet.
Festival Hall (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm.

THE GIN GAME: Dorothy Tutin and Joss Ackland play old folk in a retirement home whose card-playing styles echo their sad lives. Frith Banbury directs a surprising Pulitzer Prizewinner.
Savoy (0171-836 8888). Opens tonight, 7pm.

SACRED HEART: This is Mick Mahoney's new play where two second-generation Irish lads, brought up in NW3, meet again after years estranged. Edward Hall directs.
Ambassadors (0171-565 5000). Opens tonight. 7pm

400 JOKES WITH THE DEVIL: *Theatre Alibi's touring account of Eisenstein's life and career, from the Odessa Steps onwards. Includes footage of his films*
Lyric Studio, W6 (0181-741 8701). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.



Dorothy Tutin stars in *The Gin Game*, Savoy

LEEDS: A Game of Golf is the second of Ayckbourn's triptych of comedies, *Intimate Exchanges*, hinging on whether Celia smokes a cigarette or not. Here she finds chaos at the club.
Courtyard (0113-213 7700). Previews tonight, 7.45pm.

POOLE: The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra under Paavo Berglund opens the evening's concert with a work from the conductor's native Finland: Sibelius's symphonic fantasy *Pohjola's Daughter*. Michael Tippett's *dynamic Concerto for Double String* Orchestra and Dvořák's magnificent Seventh Symphony complete the programme.
Poole Arts Centre (01202 685222). Tonight, 7.30pm.

ELSEWHERE

GLASGOW. Standing tickets only left for opera diva Kiri Te Kanawa's first *ever appearance at this venue.* Adding to the evening's excitement is the programme which will remain a secret until the show starts.
Royal Concert Hall (0141-287 5511). Tonight, 7.30pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London.
■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

□ **THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE:** Richard Dreyfuss and Marsha Mason make their British stage debuts in Neil Simon's play about big city angst.
Theatre Royal, Haymarket (0171-930 8800)

◪ *GOOD: C.P.Taylor's best play,* tracing a liberal professor's gradual descent into working with the Nazis. Charles Dance heads a strong cast. Michael Grandage directs.
Donmar (0171-369 1732).

■ **THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE:** Adrian Noble's spectacular production of the first Narnia adventure comes to town.
Barbican (0171-638 8891).

□ **GROSS INDECENCY:** The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde: Michael Pennington plays Wilde, with William Hoyland and Clive Francis as counsel for and against, in Moises Kaufman's play.
Gielgud (0171-494 5065).

□ **CARD BOYS:** Even the pests who stick sex cards in phone boxes have dreams of bettering themselves, Mike Packer's spirited play tells us.
Bush(0181-743 3388).

□ **A LOVELY SUNDAY FOR CREVE COEUR:** Late Tennessee Williams play where four thirtysomething women do and don't want to go for a lakeside picnic. Jenny Sealey directs for Graeae Theatre.
Drill Hall (0171-637 8270).

□ **GOB:** Jason Orange (ex-Take That) and Tom Hayes, with Spike as DJ, in Jim Kenworth's punk-rave-anarchistic attack on high culture. James Martin Charlton directs for Friendly Fire.
King's Head (0171-226 1916).

□ **MACBETH:** Rufus Sewell and Sally Dexter play the superstitious thane and his missis in John Crowley's production
Queens, W1 (0171-494 5041).

□ **DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN:** Mark Little makes his West End acting debut in Rob Becker's *new* comedy, tracing the origins of the man/woman difference back to the caves.
Apollo (0171-494 5070).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

GODS AND MONSTERS (15): Ian McKellen excels as a legendary horror movie director who grooms his gardener (Brendan Fraser) for a role far darker than that of over-muscled escort. Bill Condon directs this flawed but absorbing tale.

AMERICAN HISTORY X (18): Edward Norton is ferociously compelling as a white supremacist skinhead in Tony Kaye's lavish, controversial but doomed attempt to get under the skin of an American tragedy.

PAYBACK (18): Mel Gibson blasts his way through Brian Helgeland's chunky, sadistic thriller. The film luxuriates in its 1970s anachronisms and smooth-talking villains. With James Coburn, and Kris Kristofferson.

THE RUGRATS MOVIE (U): Painless, big cartoon adventure from Nickelodeon in which farting toddlers bond in a spooky forest. Witty enough for adults; an unavoidable necessity for three to eight-year-olds.

MIGHTY JOE YOUNG (PG): A gigantic, emotional gorilla goes mad in LA. Ron Underwood's film is a triumph of special effects over dismal stereotypes such as the shapely Charlize Theron.

LA PROMESSE (ICA): Enthralling Belgian gem about illegal immigrants by Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne. Pin-sharp performances from Jérémie Renier and Olivier Gourmet as his Fagin-like father.

AN AUTUMN TALE (U): Eric Rohmer's slight, tedious film about a middle-aged wine grower (Beatrice Romand) artfully twiddles its thumbs but offers no real incentive to detain you.

CURRENT

ARLINGTON ROAD (15): Nerve-shredding thriller with a magnificent performance by Jeff Bridges as a paranoid professor who thinks his neighbour, Tim Robbins, is hatching a terrorist conspiracy.

WAKING NED (PG): It's *Lottery Galore!* for a small village in this slushy Irish fable about a corpse in charge of a winning lottery ticket. With Ian Bannen and David Kelly. Kirk Jones directs

SEUL CONTRE TOUS (I STAND ALONE) (18). Brutal, stomach-churning voyage through a French butcher's life. Philippe Nahon puts in a monumental performance in Gaspar Noe's ghastly, *nihilistic* experiment.

ARTS

The devil downed in Georgia

POP
Steve Earle
Atlanta

Johnny Cash may be the Man in Black, but Steve Earle is the incumbent shadowy spirit of Americana. His oft-charted personal battles, played out in prison cells, drug dives and divorce courts, have threatened to obscure his exemplary fieldwork in the richest pastures of roots'n'roll. But without such internal strife, the wolfhound within Earle's inspiration would probably have had barely the bite of an ageing terrier.

Five marriages and many a recreational excess down the road, he has won back his self-respect without *slackening off the creative tension.* The result has been the best sequence of albums of his career, and every time you think you have the measure of his experimentation in folk, country and rock traditions, this Tasmanian Devil from Texas starts snarling in a new backyard.

Last month Earle released *The Mountain*, a remarkable collaboration with the noted family flag-bearers for bluegrass music, the Del McCoury Band. The improbable ensemble has been touring the United States ahead of a British tour in May, and treated visitors to Atlanta's Variety Playhouse to more than three hours at a crossroads where folk branched one way towards country and another towards elemental rock'n'roll. With long solo bouts for each act, two collaborative sets and an encore, it turned into a five-course feast.

The hulking, slouching, leather-jacketed Earle we knew was history, as we did a collective double-take at a neatly bearded, coiffured and clothed gentleman. But fire and brimstone in a jacket and tie is still fire and brimstone, and Earle was still a compulsive frontman as we watched with almost guilty pleasure the 15-rounder taking place in his head to keep the *demons at bay.*

His demeanour was in the starkest contrast to the well-scrubbed McCourys, with whom he was soon huddling around a single microphone in a glorious acoustic scrum of fiddles and mandolins, recreating such highlights of the album as *Outlaw's Honeymoon* and *Harlan Man*. McCoury, an old-school showbiz charmer with a voice like a bluegrass Lonnie Donegan, led his boys through some rousing group numbers, including an amusing take on the Lovin' Spoonful's *Nashville Cats.*

Earle's solo stint included stops at both early and late career markers, his magnetism as a narrator underscored by gritty story songs like *Taneytown*. Riding with the McCoury wagon was about as likely as Hank Williams rooming with Pete Seeger, but sometimes whiskey and cream slip down a treat.

PAUL SEXTON

Master of brimstone

RICHARD POHLE



It's been a long, hard road for Steve Earle, but he's come out of it with some great music to his name

A whisper to a scream

dEUS/Witness
Garage, N5

As far as touring partners go, the noisy Belgian art-rockers dEUS and Wigan's soul-searching balladeers Witness might not, on the face of it, seem like an obvious combination. But when these two Island Records labelmates reached London for the final night of their short UK tour, the pairing seemed to make perfect sense to the capacity crowd in North London.

First on were Witness who, on the strength of a limited-edition seven-inch single released last November and a couple of connections with their hometown's more famous sons, the Verve, were widely touted as the band to watch in 1999. Much of that promise rests on the songwriting team of singer Gerard Starkie and guitarist Ray Chan, with drums, bass and an additional guitarist/keyboard player completing the line-up.

Anyone who heard the yearning balladry on their debut single, *Quarantine*, might have expected Witness to sit around onstage or drag a stool on mid-set. Live, they quickly dispelled any such notion. You only had to hear the falsetto on the fragile, searching *Hijacker*, which provided the high point in their short set, to realise that Starkie soars beyond verse/chorus/verse. Sonically and visually, Witness have a peculiar type of dark intensity that is difficult to sum up — *but you could hear it in the* arching, strung-out blues of their latest single, Scars, and see it in the relentless, unblinking stare on Starkie's face.

Right now, Witness would seem to have far more in common with American country rockers — from REM to Will Oldham — than their UK contemporaries. In that respect, there is a link between them and dEUS, a band long championed by REM who have never been easy to define.

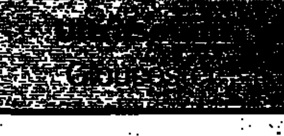
Another five-piece — this time featuring guitars, drums, bass and violin/keyboards — dEUS cook up a Captain Beefheartian mixture of noise and melody, funk and jazz, big blitzes of noise and spaced-out silences. Their eclectic approach was summed up early on in the set when *Sam Peckinpah's Daughter* was followed by *Everybody's Weird*, from their latest album, *The Ideal Crash*.

But given that there were reports of guitars being smashed onstage in an excess of rock'n'roll madness earlier *in this tour, it took a while for* dEUS to get fully into their stride. It was almost as if some energy exchange might have taken place with Witness — the soul-searchers had revved up and the noisy rockers had chilled out.

As it was, the pent-up energy simply built throughout the set, culminating in a monumental encore and an epic version of *SUdS & SOdA*.

ANN SCANLON

Drama by the pound



One of the most unlikely rock stars in Britain, Andrew "Tiny" Wood was in bullish mood at Gloucester's Guildhall Arts Centre on Sunday night. Wood is the 20-stone, 36-year-old singer and founder of Ultrasound, long-ignored outsiders who are suddenly being tipped as heavyweight stars of tomorrow on the strength of their debut double album, *Everything Picture*, due next month. Fate and fashion seem to have opened a window of opportunity for the London-based guitar quintet's oddly compelling mix of bloated pomp and eccentric showmanship. Wood and two of his naked bandmates even made headlines as catwalk models *during London Fashion Week* last month.

Like Pulp, Ultrasound spent an eternity as students and dole-queue misfits before fame finally beckoned. Which may explain why their music has absorbed a similarly encyclopaedic arsenal of pop references, and why Wood's stage persona blends art-school poise with charismatic defiance in a manner reminiscent of Jarvis Cocker. He certainly appeared heroically indifferent to public scorn on Sunday, draping his ample frame in a glittery shirt and garish tartan trousers.

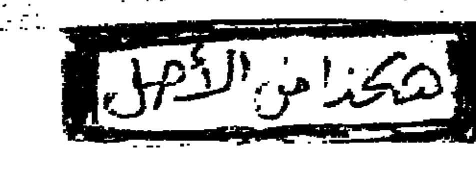
Musically, the band plundered three decades of pop, from psychedelia to glam rock to punk, without settling for long on any single style. A clutch of tunes, notably the early single *Same Band* and the savage *Fame Thing*, obeyed the classic pop rules of speed and brevity. But the majority of their compositions sprawled and swelled into mini-operas, each adorned by the baroque solos of the guitarist Richard Green. Ultrasound clearly delight in revisiting precisely those forbidden zones of rock which have been critically disdained by the independent music scene since Led Zeppelin disbanded.

Significantly, though, this was no mere progressive rock revival show. First, the band's raucous and emotionally charged sound owed more to the timeless primal racket of garage rock than to the pseudo-classical pretensions of 1970s supergroups. More importantly, Wood sang not of goblins and wizards, but delivered swooningly romantic lyrics with the persuasive panache of a seasoned torch singer. Behind all the self-conscious allusions to rock history, their set was grounded in such direct expressions of love as their robustly traditional new single, *Floodlit World*, or their ravaged heartbreak ballad, *Sentimental Song*.

While the novelty appeal of Wood's appearance and his band's more experimental leanings may soon fade, it is their flair for simple and emotive tunes which will decide their longevity in the rock marketplace. Fashion may merely be flirting with Ultrasound, but their best songs deserve a deeper commitment.

STEPHEN DALTON





The property market is blossoming, fuelled by cheaper mortgages and the prospect of even lower interest rates, writes **Rachel Kelly**

Spring brings growth in house prices



For sale signs are going up all over the country, but the property market in Harrogate, above, is recording above-average increases in home prices

The house had been on the market since Christmas. No amount of baking bread or roasting coffee beans had nudged buyers into making an offer.

But last week, as the magnolia buds opened and the cherry trees blossomed, not just one, but three offers came in quick succession, all at the asking price for the four-bedroom property in West London.

It makes no difference that the house in question is owned by my best friend. It's official: the housing market has picked up, says the Council of Mortgage Lenders.

Lending in Feburary totalled £6.4 billion, up from £6.1 billion in January. Michael Coogan, the director-general, says: "In the light of current high levels of affordability, we are cautiously optimistic that the housing market is experiencing the beginning of a modest upturn."

The main spur has been cheaper mortgage rates. Average variable rates on new loans were 6.4 per cent in February, compared to 6.53 per cent in January, and average fixed rates were 6.22 per cent (6.5 per cent in January.)

"Cheaper mortgage rates as a result of February's rate cut are reflected in the latest figures," says Mr Coogan. "There are some very attractive fixed-rate deals on the market to suit those who are looking for payment certainty for a set period."

Having eased monetary policy for the past five months, the Bank of England left interest rates unchanged at its committee meeting this month. But the expectation is that rates will fall still lower as the UK prepares to join the euro.

Economic stability is playing its part, too. Surveys show that consumer and business confidence has improved in recent months, although activity is weak. This is in contrast to the world economic turmoil last summer, when fears of an Asian meltdown hit City bonuses, the main drive to London house price rises.

Other property watchers confirm a rosier market. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) says in its quarterly report on the housing market that agents are more optimistic than at any time since early last summer.

Ian Perry, from RICS, says: "Prices traditionally strengthen around this time of year, but even allowing for the 'spring factor', the recovery in the market has been strong, bolstered by the tightness in supply and a lack of fresh houses coming up for sale."

London especially has seen a surge in the market. George Pope, from the agents John D Wood in Fulham, says: "In the higher price ranges potential sellers are becoming optimistic that values will rise further in the next few months, particularly if interest rates fall again."

Hotspots include Greenwich, where the Land Registry reports rises of 17.6 per cent over the past year. The borough has been boosted by the prospect of the Jubilee Line and the Docklands Light Railway extension.

In Chelsea, Kevin Ryan, from the agents Egertons, reports that there has been an increase in the number of inquiries, but no increase in the number of houses for sale. "This has led to unwelcome gazumping, which we have seen twice this month. High prices are being offered which may not stand up to mortgage valuations."

Outside London, Rutland is another bright spot: the Land Registry reports prices are up 16.7 per cent over the past year. Banbury in Oxfordshire has gained from improved rail services: North Dorset has been boosted by the numbers of people working from home and schools such as Sherborne, Bryanston, and Canford; and there is a golden triangle between Leeds, Harrogate and Wetherby.

However, the boom has been less pronounced in the Midlands and much of the North, where the market reflects the troubled, dying industries.

Overall, there is no such thing as one "housing market" but a series of micro-markets each influenced by a number of factors, not least the local employment prospects as well as supply and demand.

The Budget seems to have made no difference. Mr Perry says: "Most sales will escape the half per cent rise in stamp duty, but it may have some dampening effect at the top end of the housing market, especially in London."

True enough: £250,000 will buy only a relatively modest house in the South. In the past two years stamp duty payable on such a property has jumped from £2,500 to £6,250. Ultimately we have moved, albeit gradually, from an environment where housing was subsidised to one where it is taxed.

The Woolwich also reports a recovering market. About half of the estate agents, removal companies and solicitors who responded to the Woolwich's survey said that business had improved.

It also recorded a more stable market. "A significant pointer to this is the proximity of selling prices to asking prices," says Alan White, of the Woolwich. Estate agents say that 59.2 per cent of properties are selling within 5 per cent of the asking price.

SMART MOVES

Toad Hall for sale

■ CHURCH Cottage, the former home of Kenneth Grahame, author of *The Wind in the Willows*, is for sale. The Grade II listed house in Pangbourne, Berkshire, has five bedrooms, three reception rooms, a kitchen-breakfast room, a utility room, two bathrooms and a boxroom. It is available through Lane Fox at £425,000.

■ THE house of sculptor John Houlston is for sale. He was commissioned to sculpt the head of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, shortly before her death. He will now present the work as a gift to the National Aids Trust.

The house has three bedrooms, a bathroom, first-floor study, sitting room and kitchen-breakfast area. It is for sale through the Canterbury office of Cluttons Daniel Smith at £195,000.

■ A WARNING, monitoring and observation post at Crowfield, Suffolk is being sold at auction. The site, which measures 86ft x 50ft, comprises an underground chamber designed to accommodate several people and has a guide price of £4,000. The property is being sold through Clarke & Simpson.

■ A BUYER has been found for the penthouse at Regent's Park House in NW1, billed at one time as the most expensive flat for sale in London. It has been sold to a UK buyer for its asking price of £4.5 million. The flats will be completed by May 1999. Since the sale of the penthouse, the £14 million Belgravia flat of Sir Evelyn de Rothschild has gone on the market.

■ NEIL JORDAN, who is directing an adaptation of Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*, is renting a house in Northumberland Place, famous as the former Notting Hill pad of Peter Mandelson.

STEVEN FLETCHER

Pull the bath plug and sprinkle the garden


Using drinking water for the garden and washing cars is a waste of resources; recycled water should be used instead

Diana Wildman reports on moves to recycle water in our homes — and save us money

The Government is planning to introduce legislation to make both old and new homes more energy-efficient. It has already collected a raft of ideas that are being developed into practical proposals and these are due to be completed by August. The Government then plans to implement these during the first half of next year.

Water conservation is now as serious an environmental issue as CO_2 emissions and energy efficiency. Water meters are standard in all new homes and thousands of householders have elected to have them installed. Indeed, it is only now, says Ian Cook of the chartered surveyors Ekins, that consumers are beginning to realise that water, like gas and oil, is a natural commodity that has to be treated and paid for.

But recycled household water evokes all kinds of murky jokes and, as Mr Cook confirms, has a serious image problem.

"Energy savings may well be required as an integral part of the home-buying process soon. Our surveys already meet anticipated government guidelines by including energy-efficiency ratings and a list of recommended cost-effective improvements," he says. "But recycled water is known as 'grey' water, which sounds terrible. It has to be considered a safe, pleasant and jolly good idea."

Tim Rumbelow, a marketing director, thinks that recycling water is a brilliant idea and is something he is making optimum use of in his new home, a three-bedroom conversion of part of the former racing stables (built in 1838) of Calke Abbey in Derbyshire.

He is building a loft-style galleried home within the original stone walls and is incorporating a simple water-filter system to pump used bath and washing-machine water into a garden sprinkler system. Later, he plans to pump this water back for flushing the lavatory.

These measures are required by the Norwich & Peterborough Building Society, the first British lender to provide "green" mortgages. Mr Rumbelow says: "I paid £40,000 for the property, plan to spend about £60,000, and obtained a Norwich & Peterborough green mortgage for £80,000, payable as work progresses, providing I fulfil certain energy-ratings criteria. The focus is on all-round environmental awareness and, as I will have a water meter, saving money. I am more and more reflective about the environment but I need to balance the financial benefits against the cost of being environmentally aware."

Robert and Melaine Kybird, friends of Mr Rumbelow, have decided to buy the adjoining section of these derelict buildings and convert them into a three-bedroom family home. Mr Kybird, 32, who has also secured a green mortgage from Norwich & Peterborough, plans to implement the same water-recycling measures as his future neighbours.

Mr Kybird says: "One of the planning conditions was that we reinstate the dry-stone wall which once surrounded the property. I plan to tackle this as, for a while in my teens, I trained as a dry-stone waller, which of course is now extremely environmentally correct."

Sylvia Holden and her partner Carl Lewis are buying a three-bedroom house for £62,995, which is being built by Beazer Homes in Lower Darwen, Lancashire. A joint project involving Beazer and Anglian Water means that an eco-friendly, self-contained water-treatment system is being installed in all 123 homes under construction. Most waste water will be disinfected before being returned to the home to be used to flush the lavatory.

Darren Bell, of Beazer Homes, says: "Water is becoming a precious resource. Our responsibility to be more 'waterwise' doesn't mean going short of water, but rather reducing waste by recycling. Given that more than a third of treated drinking water is flushed down the loo, our initiative is a step forward in water efficiency."

Ms Holden says: "My children study environmental science at school and know all about water recycling. They are ecologically aware and are delighted that we are using 'grey' water in our home. We have been told our water bills should be one-third less and it will be interesting to see if this is the case."

Andrea Fawell, the sales director for Linden Homes, heeding her own marketing, bought a three-bedroom terraced house at Lingfield, Surrey, three years ago. Ms Fawell, 33, says: "I was not eco-conscious before but these days we are all made to feel so guilty about wasting resources so I decided on a water-efficient garden and went to a specialist landscape architect.

"Being a busy career woman, I did not want to have to start getting out a hosepipe every summer evening when I returned from the office. My 18-year-old nephew had also been telling me that I must recycle water, a fact drummed into him at school. It is natural for his generation to think that way but a complete re-education for me."

It is not only in Britain that water conservation is becoming part and parcel of housebuilding. Bendinat is a smart golf development on Majorca at which the latest phase of apartments, overlooking the golf course, feature a two-tier flush system in each lavatory; the short flush uses half the water of a long flush. Andrew Spence, the Bendinat marketing director, points out that as water is expensive, this alone saves owners at least £50 a year.

"We have a separate network of recycled water that we use for the gardens and golf course. The alternative is that it flows straight into the sea, which causes its own problems."

● *Ekins Surveyors: 0990 404060; N & P Building Society: 01733 372372; Beazer Homes: 0161-480 7588; Linden Homes: 01883 348108; Bendinat: 0171-736 1700.*

PROPERTY

NORTH OF THE THAMES

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SOUTH OF THE THAMES

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CLAPHAM COMMON. Victorian hse & walled gdn. 5 beds. Conservation area £497,000 F'hold. 0171 221 9044

SOUTH OF THE THAMES

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WANDSWORTH COMMON Ground floor flat with 22ft garden. 1 bed, recep, kit/b.fst rm, bath, cellar, gch. £141,000 L/H Andrew Milton & Co 0181 767 0075

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£195,000
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CITY & WEST END

BARBICAN, EC1. Lge 1 bed flat £110,000. Stock Page Stock 0171 251 4171

BLOOMSBURY, WC1 2 bed, grnd flr flt in portered blk, north of Russell Square stn & Renoir Cinema, cloakroom, Ind. central heating, fitted kit. £142,000. 76 yrs. Frank Harris & Co 0171 387 0077.

BLOOMSBURY, WC1. Recent. Refurb. 3 bed flt in pop. mans. Blk. Sth of Bedford Square. Fitted Kit, en-suite, nr to most. Bed. £335,000. 974 yrs. Share of F/H. Frank Harris & Co 0171 387 0077.

BLOOMSBURY WC1. Top flr studio in pop. mans. Blk. close to Russell Square stn. Ideal pied-a-terre. 106 yrs. £72,500. Frank Harris & Co. 0171 387 0077.

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CITY & WEST END

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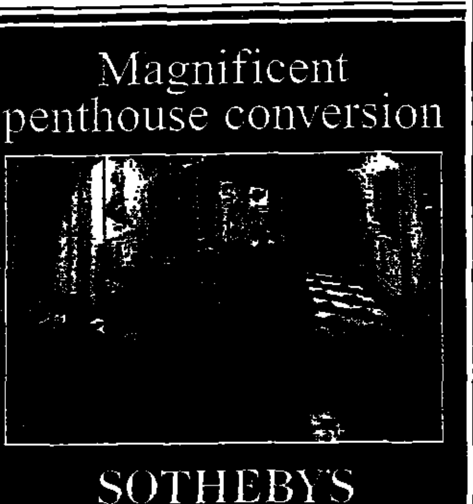
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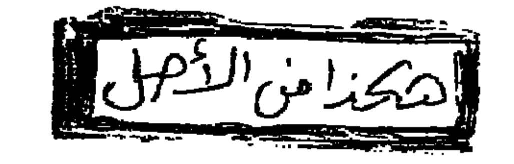


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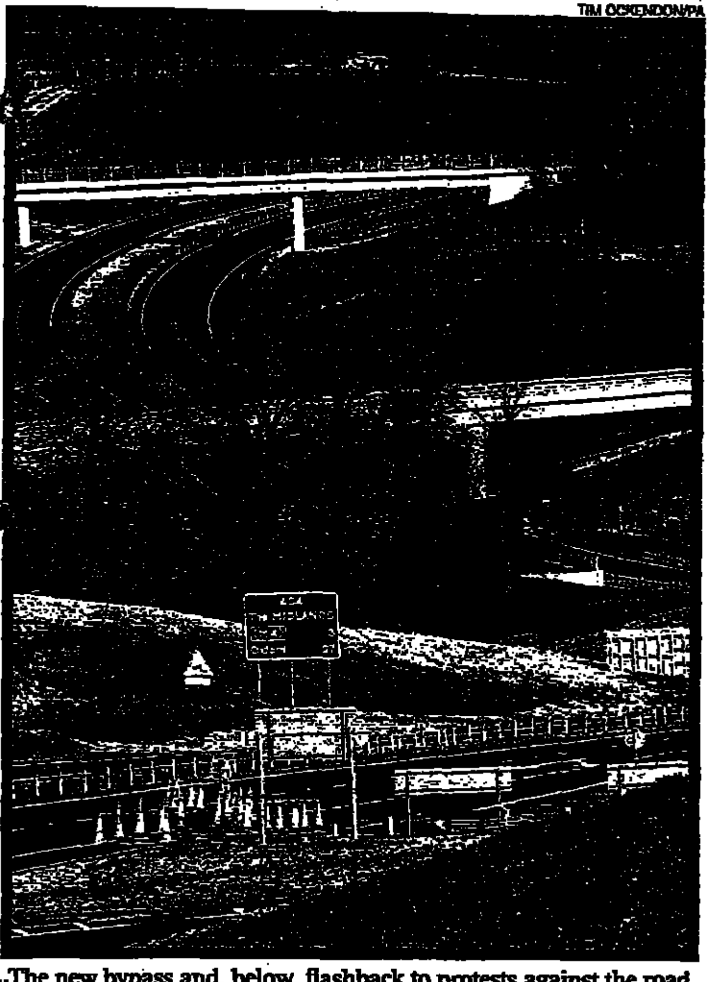
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Villages around Newbury, blighted for years by traffic gridlock, are now being targeted by home-seekers. **Fred Redwood** reports

Bypass is a breath of fresh air

TIM OCKENDON/PA



The new bypass and, below, flashback to protests against the road



For decades Newbury in Berkshire was mainly associated with one thing — a traffic jam. Tempers frayed as 50,000 vehicles a day crawled along the A34 next to the town centre. Now, since construction of the much-criticised bypass, things have changed.

About 80 per cent of the traffic has been taken away from the town and Newbury has had a facelift. Consequently the villages outside *Newbury — particularly those to* the south — have become much sought-after.

In pre-bypass days the villages of Highclere, Burghclere, Ball Hill, Ecchinswell and Woolton Hill suffered most from the daily jams. At peak times it could take almost an hour for shoppers living just three or four miles from the town centre to manoeuvre their way through the traffic and find a parking place. Commuters to the M4 had to plan their journeys to work with military precision to avoid delays.

Mike Reagan, who works near Heathrow and lives in Ball Hill, is one who appreciates the bypass. "I have always liked living here," he says. "It's an area of outstanding natural beauty and great for walking. But the traffic used to be a drawback. I save several hours of journey time each week thanks to the new road."

Houses in the southern villages promise to be wise investments. Already agents claim that prices are 5 per cent above the rate of appreciation that they would normally have expected, thanks to the bypass.

Scare stories about the road have proved *unfounded*. "*It was feared* that proximity to such a busy road would create noise," says Crispin Holborow at the agents FPD Savills, "but that hasn't been the case at all. *The Highways Agency* used an expensive type of porous asphalt that absorbs traffic noise. It also built noise-barriers and earth banks in areas where problems were likely."

Several interesting properties in the villages south of Newbury have recently appeared on the market.

Hyde House is on the edge of Ecchinswell, at the foot of White Hill — better known to readers of Richard Adams's books as Watership Down.

The house was built in 1984 by the present owners and is approached through wooden electric gates set in brick pillars. A gravel drive leads to a turning circle at the front. Hyde House, on the market at £800,000, has red-brick walls and a clay tile roof. There are six main reception rooms, including a kitchen/breakfast room with exposed beams and a walk-in wine store. A *mahogany, double-glazed* conservatory leads to the terrace and garden. Upstairs are four spacious bedrooms and a nursery. Homeworking would be an easy op*tion as there is a flat and office*, with a sitting room and shower room, in the detached garage block.

The gardens, covering about 3.5 acres, have impressive lawns, a wildlife pond and wood, a stable, a barn and four kennels. Hyde House is for sale through FPD Savills.

> Newbury is building a real market town atmosphere. House prices are up by an extra 5%

The area south of Newbury, lying beneath the chalk upland of North Hampshire, is horseracing countryside. There are training stables at Kingsclere and the Queen's racing manager, the Earl of Carnarvon, lives in Highclere Castle. Lord *Lloyd-Webber is just a few miles* away at Sydmonton.

The main drawback in the past was lack of a decent town — Newbury was jammed and the only op*tions were Basingstoke, with its* roundabouts and stark town centre, and Andover, which is built in a similar 1960s London-overspill style to Basingstoke.

After construction of the bypass, West Berkshire County Council took immediate action to remedy the situation. The opening of the road was shrouded in secrecy to outwit the protesters. Then the central shopping area was quickly pedestrianised. "Newbury has been improved enormously," says the council spokesman Peter Gilmour. "Traffic pollution has been cut and shoppers have returned to the town. Last year, when other retailers reported a drop of about 4 per cent in sales, Newbury had its busiest Christmas for many years.

"Our intention now is to extend the pedestrianisation," says Mr Gilmour. "We already have new bistros and restaurants and there are two good theatres. Newbury is building a real 'market town' atmosphere and compares very favourably with the other M4 corridor towns, such as Swindon and *Bracknell.*"

Two other properties to the south of Newbury that will attract interest are The Cooper's Arms and New Hay House, both at Woolton Hill. As its name suggests, The Cooper's Arms, for sale at £325,000, is a recently converted pub. It has three main reception rooms, five bedrooms and three bathrooms. The old pub garden, about 115ft *long* and 75ft wide, backs on to open countryside. The agents are Burrough & Co.

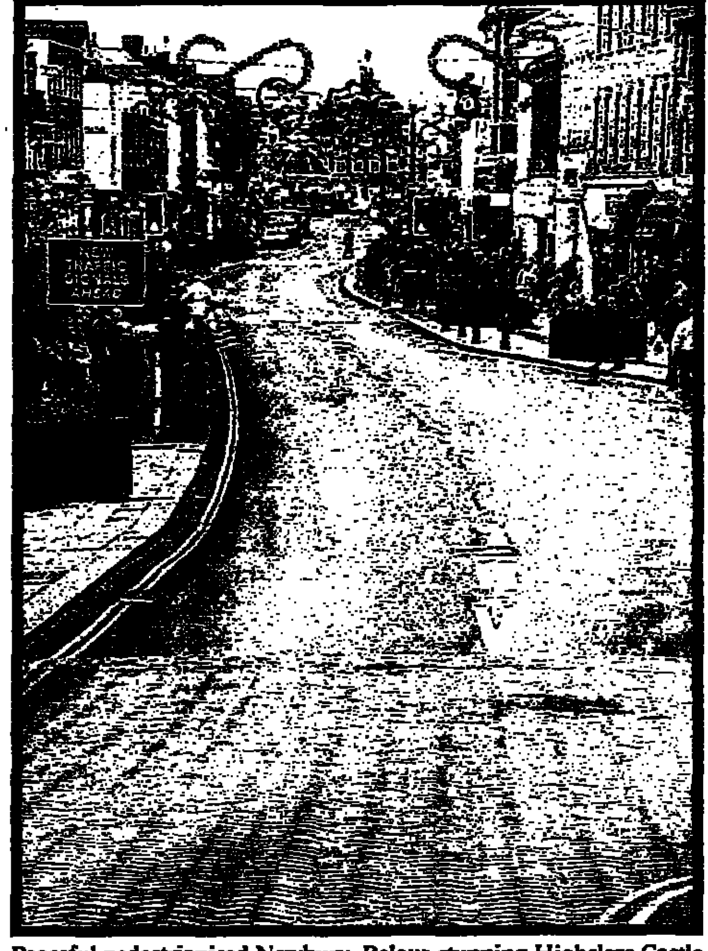
New Hay House, on sale for £390,000, was designed and built in a Scandinavian style by its present owners in 1995. It has an attractive balcony outside the main bedroom and is full of exposed beams and *pine* panelling. There are three reception rooms, four double bedrooms and two bathrooms. With mature, private gardens of nearly half an acre, the house is with the agents Dreweatt & Neate.

Not everyone approves of the Newbury bypass. Many claim that damage has been caused to important wildlife habitats around *Snelsmore Common and Donning*ton Castle. Others believe that better communications will result in an influx of new businesses, placing an intolerable strain on the *town's infrastructure*.

But many local people are happy with the improved access to both the M4 and Newbury town centre. Simon Liquorish, the landlord of The Yew Tree Inn at Highclere, is a supporter of recent developments. "This area is full of lovely, interlinking villages and beautiful countryside," he says. "Previously the A343 outside my pub was a rat-run for lorries avoiding the Newbury jam. Now we have peace again."

● FPD Savills, 0171-499 8644; Burrough & Co, 01635 521606; Dreweatt & Neate, 01635 263000.

WESTLEY HARGRAVE/NS NEWS GROUP



Peaceful pedestrianised Newbury. Below: stunning Highclere Castle



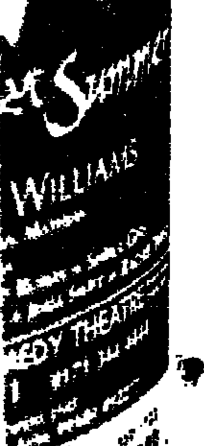













Law Report March 31 1999 Court of Appeal

Terrorism Act incompatible with Convention on Human Rights

Regina v Director of Public Prosecutions, Ex parte Kebilene and Others
Regina v DPP, Ex parte Rechachi

Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, *Lord Chief Justice*, Lord Justice Laws and Mr Justice Sullivan

[Judgment March 30]

Where, pending the coming into force of the Human Rights Act 1998, the Director of Public Prosecutions had consented to prosecutions under sections 16A and 16B of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1989, as inserted, and those provisions were ruled at trial as incompatible with the presumption of innocence guaranteed by article 6(2) of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1953) (Cmd 8969), it was appropriate for him, in reconsidering his consent, to take account of the probable consequences of any such incompatibility.

It was, moreover, appropriate *for the Divisional Court, on a challenge* to the DPP's decision confirming consent, to review the correctness of the legal basis on which he had relied and to offer guidance as to the true effect of the Convention. In the court's view those provisions, as currently drawn, were repugnant to article 6(2) of the Convention.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held, granting declaratory *relief on applications by Sofiane* Kebilene, Ferine Boukemiche, Sofiane Souidi and Fateh Rechachi that the continuing decision of the DPP in each case under section 19(1)(aa) of the 1989 Act, as amended by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, to continue their prosecutions under sections 16A and 16B of the 1989 Act, as inserted by section 82 of the 1994 Act, was unlawful.

Mr Kebilene, Mr Boukemiche and Mr Souidi had been arrested and charged with an offence contrary to section 16A. At their trial the judge ruled that the section was incompatible with article 6(2) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The DPP, being asked to reconsider his consent, sought legal advice and appeared by counsel before the judge to submit that the ruling was wrong. The judge adhered to his decision and the director maintained his opinion that section 16A was not inconsistent with article 6(2).

Mr Rechachi was charged with offences under sections 16A and 16B. Following the DPP's consent *to the institution of proceedings he* was arraigned and pleaded not guilty.

Section 16A of the 1989 Act, as inserted, provides:

"(1) A person is guilty of an offence if he has any article in his possession in circumstances giving *rise* to a reasonable suspicion that the article is in his possession for a purpose connected with the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism...

"(3) It is a defence for a person charged ... under this section to *prove that at the time of the alleged* offence the article in question was not in his possession for such a purpose as is mentioned in (1) above.

"(4) Where a person is charged ... under this section and it is proved that at the time of the alleged offence - (a) he and that article were both present in any premises; or (b) the article was in premises of which he was the occupier or which he habitually used otherwise than as a member of the public, the court may accept the fact proved as sufficient evidence of his possessing that article at that time unless it is further proved that he did not at that time know of its presence in the premises in question, or, if he did know, that he had no control over it."

Section 16B, as inserted, provides:

"(1) *No person shall, without* lawful authority or reasonable excuse (the proof of which lies on him) - (a) collect or record any information which is of such a nature as is likely to be useful to terrorists in planning or carrying out any act of terrorism to which this section applies; or (b) have in his possession any record or document containing any such information as is men*tioned in paragraph (a) above.*"

Article 6 of the European Convention provides:

"2 Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law."

Lord Lester of Herne Hill, QC and Mr Ben Emmerson for Kebilene, Boukemiche and Souidi; Mr Geoffrey Robertson, QC and *Mr Tim Owen* for Rechachi; Mr David Pannick QC, Mr Rabinder Singh and Miss Jane Mulcahy for the DPP.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE said that the crucial issues between the parties concerned the impact, if any, of the 1998 Act on the exercise of the DPP's discretion to prosecute during the interim period between enactment and the bringing into force of its main provisions; and the role and jurisdiction, if any, of the Divisional Court in reviewing that exercise of discretion.

The sections were directed to the possession of articles and items of information innocent in themselves but capable of forming part of the paraphernalia or operational intelligence of the terrorist. The court understood that the applicants were the first defendants to be prosecuted under those provisions in England and Wales.

The purpose of requiring the director's consent was without doubt to ensure that the decision to prosecute was taken at a senior level in the Crown Prosecution Service, following careful consideration of all relevant matters including, in particular, the public interest, and to protect defendants from the risk of oppressive prosecutions: see *R v Cain* ([1976] QB 496, 502).

His Lordship, referring to *R v Manchester Crown Court, Ex parte DPP* ([1993] 1 WLR 1524) and *R v Bedwellty Justices, Ex parte Williams* ([1997] AC 225), rejected Mr Pannick's submission that, in reliance on section 29(3) of the Supreme Court Act 1981, the court had no jurisdiction to entertain the present applications, alternatively, it ought not in its discretion do so.

Legitimate expectation

The applicants had relied on the legitimate expectation that the DPP would exercise his prosecutorial discretion in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights following the enactment of the Human Rights Act 1998 and pending the bringing into force of its central provisions.

Such expectation was said to derive from the United Kingdom's ratification of the Convention, from the enactment of the 1998 Act, in particular section 22(4), and from public statements made by ministers since the passing of the Act: see *Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs v Teoh* ((1995) 128 ALR 353, 365).

His Lordship rejected that submission. Ratification took place nearly half a century ago, when it was generally assumed that it would have no practical effect on British law and practice, as proved for many years to be the case. It could not plausibly be said that ratification so long ago gave rise to a legitimate expectation.

His Lordship also rejected the assertion of a legitimate expectation, founded on the measure of retrospectivity introduced by section 22(4) of the 1998 Act once section 7(1)(b) came into force, that the DPP would meanwhile exercise exercise his prosecutorial discretion so as to refuse consent to any prosecution which would, after the provisions came into force, be held unsafe on any Convention ground.

Such an expectation was contradicted by the express terms of the Act. Parliament had thought it right, for readily understandable reasons, to stipulate that the central provisions should not come into force on the passing of the Act but on a later date to be appointed by the secretary of state.

If Parliament had intended the whole Act to take effect on its receiving the Royal Assent it would have so provided. It would fly in the face of that clear legislative intention if the central provisions were to be treated, in a case such as the present, as having immediate effect when the Act itself provided that they should not.

Statements by *ministers* concerning the future conduct of themselves and their officials could found no legitimate expectation concerning the future decisions of the director since he, like the law officers, acted wholly independently of the executive when making decisions *on the conduct of criminal* proceedings.

It was his public duty and responsibility to exercise his own judgment. He could not be bound by any statement made on behalf of the executive and no reasonable person, alert to his constitutional role, could expect him to be so.

His Lordship would be extremely hesitant to hold that a legitimate expectation could be founded on answers given in Parliament to often extremely general questions.

To do so would be to invest assertions by the executive with a quasi-legislative authority, which could involve an undesirable blurring of the distinct functions of the legislature and the executive.

Constitutional position of the DPP

Mr Pannick had submitted that the DPP's duty was to exercise his prosecutorial discretion in accordance with the law of the land, including sections 16A and 16B, and not including the central provisions of the Human Rights Act giving the force of law to the articles of the Convention.

He submitted that unless and until those provisions were brought into force, so becoming part of domestic law, they had no binding effect and no more effect that they had ever had; until that time the Convention could not be relied on to counter, undermine, modify or emasculate the plain and unambiguous effect of primary domestic legislation which had been duly brought into force.

His Lordship agreed with much of that argument. The DPP would lay himself open to criticism and the risk of successful challenge if, without good reason, he were to resolve to treat section 16A and 16B as, for all practical purposes, a dead letter.

Those sections remained the law of the land. It was not for the DPP to disapply legislative provisions.

The Convention, despite its recent advance towards incorporation, had not crossed the Rubicon separating prospective from binding law. The former could not over*ride the latter and the director* would err if he treated it as doing so.

But when with the trial judge's ruling, the case took an unexpected turn, it was incumbent on the director to reconsider his consent afresh in the light of all the relevant considerations. He did so no doubt reviewing the strength of the case against those applicants, the prospects of conviction and the public *interest in pursuing the prosecution.*

One relevant aspect of that public interest calling for his consideration was whether, if the applicants were convicted, their convictions would be upheld on appeal.

He would appreciate that the secretary of state, while under no legally enforceable duty to bring the main provisions into force, did not enjoy an absolute discretion not to do so and the DPP could not, any more than any other person outside Whitehall, predict when those provisions would be brought into force. But he would probably expect it within a couple of years or so.

It was appropriate for him to consider the probable consequences if the trial judge's view on compatibility was correct. The director could still, one might assume, expect the long and expensive trial to culminate in convictions. But appeals against conviction would almost inevitably follow.

If at the time of the appeal hearing the central provisions were in force, the applicants would be entitled on appeal to rely on sections 7(1)(b) and 22(4), and the convictions, on the basis of inconsistency, would probably be quashed, at some not inconsiderable cost to the public purse and no obvious advantage to the public weal.

If, at that time, they were not in force, the appeals would be likely to fail on that ground but the applicants would show a violation of the Convention by the United Kingdom and so obtain a decision in their favour in the European Court of Human Rights and perhaps recover compensation and achieve their release.

A conscientious and rational director would wish when exercising his judgment whether to confirm his consent, to know so far as possible where he stood and whether those possible consequences were likely to eventuate.

It was plain that he did wish to know and had sought legal advice. It was therefore appropriate for the court to review the soundness of the advice on which he had publicly made clear he had relied; for if that advice was unsound he should, in the public interest, have the opportunity to reconsider the confirmation of his consent on a sound legal basis.

That approach was consistent with *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Launder* ([1997] 1 WLR 839, 867). In offering such guidance as it could on the true effect of the Convention, the court did not usurp the legislative responsibility of Parliament nor the independent decision-making responsibility of the director so long as it left the final decision to him.

Compatibility of sections 16A and 16B with article 6(2)

The applicants had submitted that the presumption of innocence was undermined if a legal burden was placed on a defendant to disprove any substantial ingredient of the offence of which he was accused.

It was, they said, otherwise in the case of an exception, exemption, proviso, excuse or qualification which was reasonable in effect and did not constitute the gravamen of the offence; and they accepted that in some circumstances an evidential burden might properly be placed on the defendant.

Mr Pannick pointed out that the European Court accepted presumptions of fact or law as permissible so long as they were confined within reasonable limits, taking account of the importance of what was at stake and maintaining the rights of the defence; and that that court recognised the need to strike a fair balance between the demands of the general interest of the community and the requirements of the protection of an individual's fundamental rights.

He had referred to the need for flexibility and balance recognised in *Attorney-General of Hong Kong v Lee Kwong-kut* ([1993] AC 951), and that some presumptions might be necessary if certain offences were to be effectively prosecuted: see *State v Zuma* ([1995] 1 LRC 145, 166).

There was a measure of truth in that argument. Any human rights instrument had to represent a compromise between the rights of the individual and those of other individuals collectively making up the community, society or state. But a human rights instrument such as the Convention was a measure to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

That did not mean that all Convention rights were equal, some might be the subject of derogation by contracting states, others not; some were expressed without any qualification, others were subject to express qualification.

The right to a fair trial protected by article 6 was not a right from which a contracting state was permitted to derogate, but nor was it a right which was in any material way qualified.

His Lordship could readily conceive of circumstances where it would be doubtful whether the presence of a certain feature in itself undesirable was such as to render a trial unfair; but he could conceive of no circumstances where, having concluded that that feature rendered the trial unfair, the court would not go on to find a violation of article 6.

In some cases it would undoubtedly be necessary to wait until the trial process had been concluded before forming a judgment whether the trial was fair or unfair, and since a party seeking redress from the European Court had always to have exhausted his national remedies, it was inevitable that that court would conduct a retrospective review of what had transpired in the national courts.

However, the present court was not precluded, before completion of a trial, from considering the compatibility of a provision of primary legislation with the Convention: that was precisely the function for which sections 3 and 4 of the 1998 Act provided.

In their interpretation of statutes, British judges had no discretion: they had to give the statutory language what they took to be its ordinary and natural meaning.

Section 3(1), which enjoined on the courts a new interpretative approach, was not yet in force. If, properly construed, a provision of domestic legislation truly infringed the presumption of innocence, then any conviction based on that provision was likely, judged by the yardstick of the Convention, to be unsafe.

The applicants had submitted that the task of the court was to study the substantial effect of the relevant legislative provision so as to decide whether in practical terms it infringed the presumption.

The gravamen of the offence charged by section 16A was the possession of articles, in themselves innocent, for terrorist purposes. The crucial ingredients were in reality possession, the actus reus, and the terrorist purpose, the mens rea. But neither of those needed to be proved by the prosecution to the criminal standard to secure a conviction.

Section 16A(4) relieved the Crown of the need to prove possession in the ordinary way and placed a reverse burden on the accused. Section 16A(3) allowed the prosecution to establish the terrorist purpose by showing something short of proof and again placed a reverse burden on the accused in section 16A(3).

An accused who chose not to give or call evidence might be convicted by virtue of presumptions against him and on reasonable suspicion falling short of proof.

The gravamen of the offence charged in section 16B was the collection or possession of information, in itself innocent, for purposes of terrorism. The actus reus was the collection or possession and that had to be proved to the criminal standard. But the mens rea was the purpose for which the information was collected or possessed. That did not need to be proved by the prosecution at all.

Instead a reverse burden was placed on the accused to prove lawful authority or reasonable excuse for collecting or possessing the information. An accused who chose not to give or call evidence might be convicted without the mens rea of the offence being proved.

Both sections undermined in a blatant and obvious way the presumption of innocence. The provisions fell foul of the rule propounded by the Chief Justice of Canada in *R v Whyte* ((1988) 51 DLR (4th) 481, 493).

Under section 16A, a defendant could be convicted even if the jury entertained a reasonable doubt whether he knew the items were in his premises and whether he had the items for a terrorist purpose.

Under section 16B, a defendant could be convicted even if the jury entertained a reasonable doubt whether the information had been collected or was possessed for any terrorist purpose. In both sections the presumption of innocence was violated.

The United Kingdom had not chosen to derogate from its obligation to comply with article 6 and, in relation to foreign terrorism of the kind presently alleged, it could not have done so. Nor, there having been no prosecution up to now since sections 16A and 16B came into force in 1995, was it easy to see those sections as a vital defence against international terrorism.

While it was true that Parliament enacted those sections, it had also shown a clear intention that the Convention rights scheduled to the 1998 Act should be legally protected, while permitting the date of effective protection to be temporarily deferred.

Referring to Mr Pannick's submission on the reasonableness of *requiring a defendant to adduce evidence* of matters better known to himself than anyone else, his Lordship said that whenever a criminal intention was an essential ingredient of a crime the defendant was better placed to prove his intention than anyone else, but that did not relieve the prosecution of the need to prove a criminal intention against him in the overwhelming majority of cases. The correct approach was that expounded in *State v M'batha* ([1996] 2 LRC 208, 218).

While it would be inappropriate to express any view on the facts, affidavit evidence adduced by the applicants did show how, under the sections as they stood, serious injustice could be done to the applicants.

Lord Justice Laws delivered a concurring judgment and Mr Justice Sullivan agreed with both judgments.

Solicitors: Birnberg & Co; Birnberg & Co; Treasury Solicitor.

Power to disapply time bar

Shapland v Palmer

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Waller and Lord Justice Clarke

[Judgment March 23]

Where a plaintiff issued proceedings in a personal injury action against a different defendant after the expiry of the primary limitation period, the court had power to *exercise its discretion under sec*tion 33 of the Limitation Act 1980 to disapply the time bar provisions of section 11 of the Act, even though the plaintiff had already issued similar proceedings in respect of the same injuries against another defendant within the primary limitation period.

The Court of Appeal so stated allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, Christina Shapland, from the refusal by Judge Bishop at Kingston upon Thames County Court on September 2, 1998 of her application for a direction under section 33 that section 11 should not apply to bar her action.

On March 26, 1993 the plaintiff suffered a whiplash injury when the defendant, Ms W. Palmer, drove into the back of her motorcar. The defendant at the time was *driving her company car in the* course of her employment.

The company, Headway Home and Law Publishing Ltd, and the defendant were both entitled to be indemnified against liability for the accident under the company's insurance policy. Liability was never disputed.

The plaintiff had issued proceedings initially against the company on March 26, 1996, the last day of the three-year primary limitation period. The summons, however, was not served during the four-month period of its validity: it was sent by document exchange to the company's solicitors at the very end of that period and the deemed date of service was one day out of time. Those proceedings, therefore, were later struck out.

A second similar action was brought on August 21, 1998 against the defendant driver herself. The second action was out of time so the plaintiff needed the primary limitation period under section 11 of the 1980 Act to be disapplied.

Mr Nicholas Stanton for the plaintiff; Mr Mark James for the defendant.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that the appeal raised a narrow but difficult question as to the proper limits of the principle established by the House of Lords in *Walkley v Precision Forgings Ltd* ([1979] 1 WLR 606). The *Walkley* principle would clearly have precluded the plaintiff from obtaining such a disapplication order had she brought the second action, like the first, against the company itself.

The first question was whether the fact that she brought it instead against the defendant driver should take the case outside the *Walkley* principle. Judge Bishop held that the *Walkley* principle applied to bar the second action no less than the first.

On that ruling the judge had no discretion to exercise and therefore never called for the defendant's submissions upon how such a discretion should be exercised. That said, he gave a clear indication that *but for the Walkley principle he* would have been inclined to let the second action proceed.

The *Walkley* principle was to be found in the passage from Lord Wilberforce's speech (at p609). Lord Wilberforce was there saying that, as a matter of construction, the particular prejudice to which the section 33 discretion was directed, was that occasioned by the plaintiff not having issued his proceedings within the primary three-year limitation period.

Once he had issued his proceedings within that period, then, for whatever reason they ceased to exist, whether through failure to serve, strike out for want of prosecution, or discontinuance, section 33 simply had no application.

Although Lord Wilberforce observed that any prejudice resulting from the ultimate ineffectiveness of the first proceedings was due rather to the plaintiff's inaction than to the 1980 Act, that observation seemed to his Lordship strictly outside the ratio.

It was plain that the section 33 discretion arose notwithstanding a plaintiff's solicitor's far greater negligence in failing ever to have issued proceedings within the limitation period in the first place.

His Lordship understood the *Walkley* principle to exclude from *section 33 only an action which in*volved the same defendant and the same cause of action as was the subject of earlier, timeous proceedings.

It followed that strictly it did not catch the plaintiff's second action in the present case. That a cause of action against a personal defendant was not the same as one alleging vicarious liability on the part of a principal or employer was trite law.

So much was rightly recognised by Mr James. However, he submitted that the action was so strikingly similar to the first, and the present attempt to escape the *Walkley* principle so transparent and unmeritorious, that the principle should be extended to cover it.

The only authorities on the point were, first, *Whitfield v North Durham Health Authority* ([1995] PIQR P 361), and, second, a series of cases culminating in *McEvoy v A. A. Welding and Fabrication Ltd* ([1998] PIQR P 266), both being decisions of the Court of Appeal.

The general tendency of the *McEvoy* line of cases supported the plaintiff's argument.

First, they suggested a marked unwillingness on the court's part to apply *Walkley* unless it was plain*ly indistinguishable.*

Second, they appeared to suggest that if the second action was brought against a different party then it was not caught by the *Walkley* principle.

Third, it was noteworthy that despite the various errors which had led to the plaintiff's need in each of those cases ultimately to issue a second writ out of time, the plaintiffs succeeded in all those cases, not only in escaping *Walkley* but also in persuading the court that the resultant section 33 discretion should be exercised in their favour.

Should then the *Walkley* principle be extended to the limited degree necessary to encompass the present action?

In submitting that it should, Mr James naturally emphasised the narrowness of the distinction between the present action and the earlier one brought against the company, the sole difference between the two being that of the actual defendant.

The tort, he pointed out, was in both cases identical. Both tortfeasors were covered under the same policy of insurance. And there was never any issue as to whether the company was vicariously liable.

Ably though the argument was advanced, his Lordship had no doubt that it must be rejected. By the same token that the *Walkley* principle itself rested upon a narrow and somewhat technical construction of section 33, so too it was in his Lordship's judgment possible to escape it on such grounds.

That, moreover, was particularly appropriate given the undoubted anomalies that arose from the application of the principle, most *notably its failure to impact on cas*es of perhaps greater negligence where no writ was ever issued in the first place.

His Lordship would, accordingly, rule that the section 33 discretion arose in all cases save those which fell four-square within the *Walkley* principle.

Having regard to all the various circumstances required by section 33(3) to be brought into account in the exercise of the court's discretion, his Lordship concluded that it would be equitable, on the balance of prejudice which section 33(1) required to be struck, to disapply the limitation period. The plaintiff's action should be allowed to proceed.

Lord Justice Waller and Lord Justice Clarke concurred.

Solicitors: Coleman Tilley Tarrant Sutton, Kingston upon Thames; Badhams Thompson, Croydon.

Consent to later mortgage

Locabail (UK) Ltd and Another v Waldorf Investment Corporation and Others

Before Mr Lawrence Collins, QC

[Judgment March 9]

A person who consented to a mortgage on a property was deemed to consent to a subsequent mortgage replacing the earlier mortgage, even if it was obtained without her consent, to the extent of the amount secured by the first mortgage plus interest. Where that person acquired her beneficial interest during the lifetime of the earlier mortgage, the beneficial interest she acquired was subject to a charge over the legal interest to the extent that *it secured an amount equal* to her beneficial interest.

Mr Lawrence Collins, QC, sitting as a deputy Chancery Division judge, so held in a reserved judgment dismissing the appeal of the third defendant, Mrs Barbara Emmanuel, from the order of Deputy Master Farrington, on the application of the first plaintiff pursuant to Order 14, granting the first and second plaintiffs, Locabail (UK) Ltd and Locabail International Finance Ltd, as first and second mortgagees respectively, possession of Hans House, together with two associated garages, situated in Chelsea, from the first defendant, Waldorf Investment Corporation, the registered proprietor of leasehold interests in the property, the second defendant, Ares Emmanuel, who owned and controlled Waldorf, *and the third defendant*, Barbara Hagan Emmanuel, the wife of the second defendant.

Mr Anthony Mann, QC and Mr James Barker for Locabail (UK) Ltd; Miss Hazel Williamson, QC and Mr Richard Morgan for Mrs Emmanuel.

HIS LORDSHIP said that the loan facility extended by the plaintiffs was to be used, inter alia, to refinance the indebtedness of Waldorf to Bankers Trust under an earlier mortgage dated March 14, 1985, to which end 916,749.73 was paid to Bankers Trust on June 6, 1986. Mrs Emmanuel claimed that *her* husband *had* assured her that the later mortgage had been secured on his half of the property only.

The plaintiffs sought to uphold the order appealed from on the basis that, even if the Locabail charge was unenforceable as against Mrs Emmanuel, she had nevertheless consented to the Bankers Trust charge and *therefore* must be taken to have consented to the Locabail charge to the extent that it secured the sum of 916,749.73 advanced to discharge the Bankers Trust charge.

Applying *Equity and Law Home Loans Ltd v Prestidge* ([1992] 1 WLR 137, 143), a person who consented to a mortgage on the property was deemed to consent to a subsequent mortgage replacing the earlier mortgage, even if it was obtained without his consent, to the extent of the amount secured by the first mortgage plus interest.

On that basis, Mrs Emmanuel's evidence as to the limited scope of *her* imputed consent would have raised a triable issue. However, on her own case she acquired her beneficial interest at a time when she knew and accepted that the property was charged to Bankers Trust.

Accordingly, Mrs Emmanuel acquired her beneficial interest subject to a charge over the legal interest to the extent that it secured an amount equal to her beneficial interest.

The Locabail charge was not to be regarded solely as an equitable charge on Mr Emmanuel's share of the beneficial interest. Locabail was a legal mortgagee, albeit one whose security was limited to half the value of the property.

Consequently Locabail was entitled to possession, although it would have to account to Mrs Emmanuel to the extent of her beneficial interest in the proceeds of sale.

Solicitors: More Fisher Brown; Stephenson Harwood.

Company's credit to participator deemed to be a taxable loan

Grant and Another v Watton (Inspector of Taxes)

Before Mr Justice Pumfrey

[Judgment February 11]

A close company which provided services to a participator throughout the year and invoiced the participator at the end of that year, extended credit to the participator, who was deemed to have received a beneficial loan by reason of his employment which was assessable for tax under section 160 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 *and was not eligible for relief* under section 362(1)(b) of that Act.

The date on which credit was extended was that on which the close company made payment to a third party for the goods or services it had supplied to the participator.

Mr Justice Pumfrey so held in a reserved judgment in the Chancery Division dismissing the appeal of the first appellant, Andrew *William Grant, and allowing the* Revenue's cross-appeal from the decision of Mr M. J. F. Palmer, a spe-

clusive; three assessments on the second appellant, Andrew Grant Services Ltd, under section 286 of the Income and Corporation Taxes *Act 1970, and a further five assess*ments on the second appellant under section 419 of the 1988 Act.

Mr Michael Sherry for Mr Grant; Mr James Tayler for the Revenue.

MR JUSTICE PUMFREY said that Mr Grant carried on an estate agent business as the general partner of a limited partnership. His brother, Mr Henry Grant, was a partner with limited liability under the terms of the Limited Partnerships Act 1907.

On July 4, 1977 Mr Andrew Grant established the second appellant, Andrew Grant Services Ltd, the service company, for the purpose of providing services to support the estate agency business. The service company commenced trading on September 1, 1977, ac*quiring its present name on Janu*ary 14, 1986.

At all material times Mr Grant

en into the partnership as a limited partner.

The service company was set up to provide support services, namely, the provision of heat, light, telecommunications facilities, stationery, postage, office cleaning and advertising, also the employment of staff, to the estate agency for a service fee.

As the fee was a deductible expense of the business, profits were retained within the service company at a lower rate of tax.

The service fee was calculated *annually by Mr Grant's account*ants, based upon the expenses incurred in provision of those services, adjusted to take into account items such as depreciation and rebates for advertising costs, plus an initial mark up of one-ninth of the relevant costs.

There was no agreement as to when payment for those services should be made. Instead there was *a running account, and at the end of each accounting year the audi*tors drew up the accounts and told

service company were assessed to tax under sections 160 and 419 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 respectively.

His Lordship rejected Mr Sherry's submission that there was not outstanding for the whole or part of the year any form of credit to Mr Grant for which benefit was obtained by reason of his employment.

The words "any form of credit" in section 160(5) of the 1988 Act should be given their natural meaning: see *R v Peters* ((1886) 16 QBD 636) and *R v Miller* ([1977] 1 WLR 1129). Credit was granted wherever payment was not demanded until a time later than the supply of services or goods to which the payment related.

It was the deferral of a sum which, absent agreement, would be immediately payable. The question was essentially a factual one as to when payment fell due in relation to the services provided by the service company.

The sensible conclusion from

ness, from which Mr Grant received credit.

The Revenue's first ground on the cross-appeal concerned the date of the credit. The special commissioner found that credit was extended from the date on which the company paid its supplier in relation to any particular service.

That was incorrect. The period over which any particular service was provided was a question of fact; prima facie services were rendered from day to day.

The second issue concerned whether the cash equivalent of the benefit of the credit, the notional interest, would, if paid, have been eligible for relief under section 353 of the 1988 Act by operation of section 362(1), which provided for relief on interest on a loan to an individual to defray money applied in contributing money to a partnership by way of capital or premium, or in advancing money to a partnership, where the money contributed or advanced was used wholly for the purposes of the trade carried on by

of a loan contained in section 367(3). Section 367(3) was plainly concerned with purchases which fell within the descriptions of purchases in sections 354-364 but not any others.

In contrast with, for example, section 362(1)(a) or section 354, section 362(1)(b) was not concerned with a sale or purchase. The appeal in relation to Mr Grant's assessments failed.

The question under section 419 turned on what was meant by the phrase "incurred" or "incurs a debt".

The debtor had in the ordinary sense of the word incurred a debt where he knew in respect of a service he had received that he would have to pay for that service on some date in the future, even if the debt was unascertained: see *O'Driscoll v Manchester Insurance Committee* ([1915] 3 KB 512) and *Ensign Tankers (Leasing) Ltd v Stokes* ([1989] 1 WLR 1222).

The appeal against the assessment under section 419, and sec-

RUGBY UNION

Logan gives Wasps semi-final boost by signing contract

By Mark Souster

FIVE days before their Tetley's Bitter Cup semi-final against Gloucester, for which 6,500 tickets have already been sold, Wasps yesterday received another fillip when Kenny Logan, the Scotland wing, signed a new 2¼-year contract that will keep him at Loftus Road until the summer of 2001. Logan, 26, follows Lawrence Dallaglio, the England captain, who last week pledged his future to the club for the next two years.

Despite talk of salary caps and retrenchment, Logan said that he had agreed improved terms — reported to be in excess of £80,000 a year — with the club that he joined from Stirling County in 1997. The announcement marks a significant turnaround in the fortunes of the wing, who has 38 caps. At the end of last season he was on the transfer list, having lost his club and international place, as well as his appetite for the game. He was overweight, injured and thoroughly disenchanted.

"I felt I had let Nigel Melville down," Logan said. "He was the reason I moved from Scotland. But I wasn't enjoying rugby. I had a back injury and self-doubt crept in. I was wondering, 'Is this me? Is this as far as I can go?'"

The break-up in his relationship with Kirsty Young, the Channel 5 newsreader, did not help, nor the fact that he was trying to run the 300-acre family farm from London. But after a summer off, during which time he shed a stone, he returned physically fitter and mentally sharper. "The end of the relationship enabled me to focus on rugby," Logan said. "I am a very determined person. I have grown up quickly and matured. I have proved you can be considered a failure and yet come back a better player."

Although Dallaglio and Logan will take a sizeable chunk of the club's wage bill, at present £1.8 million a year, Nigel Melville, the director of rugby, said that he supported the implementation of a salary cap for team squads, which would "stop the degree of irresponsibility that we all know exists".

Simon Crane, the chief executive of Loftus Road plc, said that finances at the company, which also includes Queens Park Rangers football club, had been stabilised after a successful £2.4 million rights issue and a loan of £1.4 million from Chris Wright, the chairman. The company is also hoping to sell part of the Sudbury ground for housing which, with planning permission, could be worth £7 million.

Logan, who in the absence of the injured Gareth Rees, successfully assumed the goalkicking duties, with a strike rate of 75 per cent, has a slight ankle strain but is expected to be fit to face Gloucester as Wasps attempt to reach Twickenham for the second successive year. Peter Scrivener, who sustained concussion at Welford Road on Saturday, is the only definite non-starter in a side that Melville is due to name today.

Newcastle, who meet Richmond in the first semi-final, will tonight be without Marius Hurter, the prop forward, for the Allied Dunbar Premiership match against London Scottish at Kingston Park. Hurter has a neck injury and is replaced by Ian Peel, who is also on standby for the cup-tie at the Madejski Stadium. Hurter sees a specialist today. Otherwise, Newcastle are at full strength. London Scottish are missing Ronnie Eriksson, the former Scotland centre.

Richard Metcalfe, the Northampton and Scotland A lock forward, goes into hospital today for an operation on a slipped disc, and will miss the remainder of the season and Scotland's summer tour to South Africa.

Clubs keep watchful eye on state of union

By Christopher Irvine

AFTER three years in which rugby league's supply of players from union has all but dried up, the imminent expiry of the first professional contracts is prompting renewed interest from league clubs in players switching codes.

Several leading English union clubs are cutting back their playing staffs to keep within the salary cap next season and developments are being closely monitored at league level.

Peter Deakin, the new chief executive of Warrington Wolves, does not think that there will be a mass exodus because of the money still available in union. "Players being cut at the top level are more likely to drop down a division, but there will always be those who want to prove themselves in league," he said.

Warrington have not pursued an interest in Dominic Chapman, the England wing, who was released by Richmond earlier this month, but the club has taken Alex Bennett from Saracens on loan for three months as part of an alliance between the two clubs. Deakin finishes as sales and marketing director at Saracens in May.

Bennett, a talented forward, who broke his arm early in the season, made his league debut in the Warrington reserve team last week. Paul Sampson, the Wasps and England wing, has been approached by Castleford Tigers.

John Kear has been made England coach for the two internationals against France, whom he coached last season, in October. Kear said that he was flattered to be mentioned as a possible replacement for Graham Murray at Leeds Rhinos next season. A clause in Kear's contract at Sheffield Eagles allows him to take up either the Leeds or Great Britain jobs.



BEN GURR

Marco Antonio Barrera, who many believe might seriously challenge Naseem Hamed, could be the World Boxing Organisation (WBO) featherweight champion's next opponent after Paul Ingle, whom Hamed meets on April 10 (Srikumar Sen writes). Frank Warren, the promoter, said: "After Ingle, Naz is off to the States to fight there. Don't look around for an opponent, we've got one here. Marco would fight him tomorrow. He can take a shot and the body shots he throws will give Naz a lot of problems." As the WBO super-bantamweight champion, Barrera, above, said that he preferred to meet Hamed at a weight between 126lb and 122lb. Warren said: "I know Naz can make the weight." He added that if Hamed refused to come down to an agreed weight, the Mexican might be persuaded to go up. Warren said that it might be possible to move Barrera into the position of mandatory featherweight challenger if he retained his title against Paul Lloyd, of Ellesmere Port, at the Albert Hall on Saturday. If Warren won the purse bid for a Hamed-Barrera contest, he said that he would stage it at the Forum in Los Angeles, where Barrera has a huge following. Warren, who used to be Hamed's promoter, said: "One of the fights I've always wanted to get on was Naz against Marco. He would be Naz's toughest opponent."

DRUGS IN SPORT

Weightlifting under heavy fire

By John Goodbody and David Powell

BRITISH weightlifting was warned yesterday that its annual funding, worth £125,000 in this financial year, may be withdrawn unless a satisfactory explanation can be given as to why a leading competitor was not banned after providing an irregular drugs sample.

As the result of the doping inquiry into Dougie Walker, the European 200 metres champion, was unexpectedly delayed, the UK Sports Council (UKSC) demanded answers on the clearing of Paul Supple, the weightlifter barred from going to the 1998 Commonwealth Games.

Supple recorded a testosterone/epitestosterone ratio above 6:1 in an out-of-competition test last August but the British Amateur Weightlifters' Association ruled two weeks ago that it could not be sure that an offence had been committed. However, the UKSC said yesterday: "We want to be reassured that the disciplinary process has been managed effectively and have requested clarification from the governing body to that effect. The council will consider the governing body's response in determining its next steps."

Walker, who returned a positive sample in an out-of-competition test in December, was expecting to learn yesterday whether he had a case to answer. However, the panel looking into his case was unable to deliver its verdict because of a delay in clarifying a scientific detail.

The hold-up occurred because the panel's chairman, Michael Beloff, QC, was on a lecture tour in the United States and was communicating by fax with other members of the inquiry team.

Bryan Bronson, of the United States, the leading 400-metre hurdler in the world, has been suspended while the International Amateur Athletic Federation considers an adverse finding against him in Rome last July.

In France, Richard Virenque, four times King of the Mountains in the Tour de France, has been charged with a criminal offence under anti-doping laws. Virenque, who used to ride for Festina, is alleged, by the team's masseur, to have been injected up to 100 times a season with EPO, a drug that enhances stamina.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Virenque on trial for drugs offences

■ **CYCLING:** Richard Virenque, the former leader of the Festina team who was expelled in disgrace from the Tour de France last summer, has been formally charged by the French authorities under the 1989 anti-doping act. Virenque has been charged with conspiracy to make available and use doping products and for conspiracy to import, purchase, and make available poisonous substances.

The Frenchman has consistently protested his innocence, insisting that he was "never knowingly doped" despite being repeatedly implicated by his former Festina masseur, Willy Voet, and by several of his former team-mates, three of whom are serving long-term bans from the sport after admitting to the use of banned red blood cell booster, EPO.

■ **BASKETBALL:** Worthing Bears have upset Worthing Borough Council after negotiating a move to Brighton next season. The council is disappointed at the decision after investing heavily in the club earlier in the decade.

■ **HOCKEY:** England thrashed South Africa 6-2 in Buenos Aires on Monday night to maintain an unbeaten record on their South American tour. Pearn and Giles each scored twice.

■ **ICE HOCKEY:** Wayne Gretzky, of the New York Rangers, became the all-time leading scorer in North American professional ice hockey when he scored the 1,072nd goal of his career against the New York Islanders.

■ **BADMINTON:** Ray Stevens has been made national coach for three months until a full-time appointment is made. Stevens will now be coaching England's leading singles players in the build-up to the world championships in Copenhagen on May 10-23.

Court of Appeal — Law Report March 31 1999 — Court of Appeal

German asylum figures relevant

Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department and Another, Ex parte Gashi

Before Lord Justice Evans, Lord Justice Thorpe and Lord Justice Buxton

[Judgment March 25]

Statistics of the outcome of applications for asylum by Kosovan Albanians in Germany should have put the Secretary of State for the Home Department on inquiry to seek an explanation from the relevant German authorities so as to satisfy himself whether Germany was a safe third country when considering the removal to Germany of an asylum seeker.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment allowing the appeal of Besnik Gashi against the dismissal by the Queen's Bench Divisional Court on November 6, 1998, of his application for judicial review of the decision of the Home Secretary on March 16 to issue a certificate under section 2 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 authorising his removal to Germany, and a consequential decision by an immigration officer of April 7 refusing him leave to enter.

The applicant, an ethnic Albanian from Kosovo, arrived in Germany in October 1996. His application for asylum was rejected, he was required to leave and claimed asylum when he came to England in December 1997.

Mr Manjit Gill and Mr Asoka Dias for the applicant; Mr Michael Beloff, QC and Miss Lisa Giovanetti for the secretary of state.

LORD JUSTICE BUXTON said that the present case concerned the decision to issue a certificate in the face of evidence that a very high proportion of Kosovan applicants to the German authorities or courts were in fact refused asylum and, subject to administrative issues, returned to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

[Amnesty International, Bonn, said that 4.5 per cent Yugoslav asylum applications were successful in 1996; 2.5 per cent in 1997 and 2.7 per cent in 1998.]

Among the propositions established as governing the court's review of the secretary of state's exercise of his powers under section 2(2) were the standard to be applied in the process of scrutiny that there should be no real risk that the asylum seeker would be sent to another country otherwise than in accordance with the Geneva Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) (Cmd 9171) and (1967) (Cmnd 3906).

When considering whether there was a real risk of the third country acting in breach of the Convention, the legal rules and procedures of that country were not to be examined in over-technical terms.

The examination had to recognise that there might be legitimately differing approaches to the Conventions broad terms: see *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Iyadurai* (*The Times* June 16, 1998; [1998] INLR 472, 483, 486).

Further, the scrutiny demanded was not only as to the jurisprudence but also as to the practice of the third country: see *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Canbolat* ([1997] 1 WLR 1569, 1576) and *Iyadurai* (at p485).

Among Mr Gill's submissions was the contention that it was irrational of the secretary of state to contemplate returning Kosovan asylum seekers to Germany when the evidence suggested that their cases would be treated so much differently there than if they had been direct asylum applicants in the United Kingdom.

Part of the secretary of state's response was that under the law as laid down, in particular in *Iyadurai*, he was entitled to adopt the advice given by Professor Kay Hailbronner, the German expert consulted by him, that Kosovan cases were in fact adjudicated on in Germany according to the Convention's provisions.

In one of his reports, dated November 10, 1997, Professor Hailbronner had indeed recorded recognition figures something of the order as alleged by the applicant, but he did not indicate that that affected his view.

There was no indication in the secretary of state's evidence that he or his officials addressed the figures at all, even to indicate why he thought them irrelevant. Even if, therefore, his Lordship was uncertain whether the point could be considered at all, the secretary of state's argument was in any event plainly wrong.

First, there was no question that the Court of Appeal in *Iyadurai* gave what was called a clean bill of health to the German decision-making process.

Not only was that case concerned with a comparatively narrow issue, but it would also go completely against the emphasis in that and other cases on anxious consideration of the circumstances to erect general rules to the effect that certain categories of evidence need not be considered at all. Indeed, the secretary of state in that case relied on statistics as to recognition rates as part of his case (p 482).

Second, it was wrong to claim that the secretary of state was entitled to rest on a general assumption that Germany properly applied the Convention, and thus transfer the burden on the applicant of displacing that assumption.

The anxious scrutiny required of the secretary of state demanded scrutiny of all the evidence; and when part of that evidence called for an explanation in terms of the safety with which certificates could be issued, it was the secretary of state to seek that explanation.

In the present case, and giving full weight to the evidence relied on by the secretary of state, the statistics did call for an explanation. No attempt was made to seek it let alone to provide it. No inquiry had been made of the German authorities and no comment invited from them.

His Lordship was well aware that to argue that Germany did not properly respect its Convention obligations would be a surprising conclusion for the secretary of state to be forced to draw, or even to suspect, addressing as it did a liberal democracy that was a signatory of the Convention and a member of the European Union, and which possessed a legal system that was admired throughout the world.

But those considerations could not possibly exclude a duty of inquiry where such inquiry was demanded. Since the secretary of state had taken no steps to seek further explanation of the figures as to actual recognition rates in Germany, his decision could not stand.

LORD JUSTICE THORPE, agreeing, added that when Professor Hailbronner was consulted by the secretary of state in October 1998 in respect of the present case, he responded with a letter, the terms of which were summarised in an affidavit sworn on behalf of the secretary of state.

The applicant's solicitors were refused a copy of the letter, the secretary of state claiming litigation privilege. In his Lordship's view, claims to litigation privilege in respect of experts' reports invariably fuelled suspicion that something damaging was being concealed.

In a field of litigation that was not purely adversarial and in which the court had an overriding obligation to promote a welfare consideration, litigation privilege did not allow a party to the litigation to refuse the production of any expert report that had been obtained for the purposes of the case: see *In re L (a Minor) (Police investigation: Privilege)* ([1997] AC 16).

It seemed at the very least arguable that the principles that had curtailed the litigation privilege in that field would apply by extension into the asylum field where the future life of an individual, his wellbeing, safety, protection from torture or other abuse, all hung on the outcome.

Lord Justice Evans agreed with both judgments.

Solicitors: Glazer Delmar, Peckham; Treasury Solicitor.

Goods were lost to fraudsters

Motis Exports Ltd v Dampskibsselskabet AF 1912, Aktieselskab and Another

Before Mr Justice Rix

[Judgment March 1]

Where, in a shipping arrangement where the goods were to be redeemed at delivery on the shippers' production of the bill of lading, the goods were taken fraudulently by presentation to the shipowners of a forged bill, then the shipowners were liable to the shippers for the loss of the goods.

Mr Justice Rix so held in the Queen's Bench Division in dismissing the application of Motis Exports Ltd for the determination of preliminary issues in its case against (1) Dampskibsselskabet AF 1912, Aktieselskab and (2) Aktieselskabet Dampskibsselskabet Svendborg for claims arising from its loss when a third party took the goods by presenting false bills of lading.

The plaintiff employed the defendant to carry its goods from China to west Africa but the bills of lading presented to the defendants after the goods had been offloaded in Africa were false and the goods were lost to fraudsters.

Mr Nigel Meeson for the plaintiff; Mr Graham Dunning for the defendants.

MR JUSTICE RIX said that the plaintiff said that the defendants were liable for delivery up of the goods without production of original bills of lading.

The defendants said that they were just as much the victims of fraud as the true owners of the cargo and that they were protected by a clause in the bill of lading which exempted them from any liability.

Was the defendant obliged to deliver against a forged bill of lading? Could a shipowner be obliged to deliver against a forged bill of lading? Clearly if the forgery was known or suspected, or if the shipowner was on notice of the possibility of forgery, the answer to both questions had to be "No".

His Lordship asked one to suppose that the forgery could not reasonably be detected. Could a shipowner be obliged to deliver against such a bill? It seemed impossible to think that he could.

He might of course be deceived, but if he obstinately refused, despite his ignorance of the deception, to deliver against the forged bill, could he be liable for that refusal to the holder of the forged bill? It could not be.

His Lordship asked one to suppose that the question was whether the shipowner was liable to deliver, that is to say had a defence in delivering, against a forged bill, in ignorance of the forgery.

If that were the case it could only be by reason of an implied term. It was hard to think, however, that it was necessary to imply such a term.

In his Lordship's judgment it was no defence to a shipowner or to the defendants in this case, innocently to be deceived by production of a forged bill of lading into release of cargo.

Solicitors: Lewis Moore & Co; Stephenson Harwood.

Refusal to recognise shop steward

F. W. Farnsworth Ltd v McCoid

Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Ward

[Judgment March 23]

An employer's refusal to continue recognising an employee as a union shop steward because of his conduct, was action taken against him "as an individual" within section 146(1) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

The Court of Appeal so held in dismissing the appeal of the employer, F. W. Farnsworth Ltd, against the decision of the Employment Appeal Tribunal (Judge Butter, QC, Dr D. Grieves and Mrs P. Turner) on March 27, 1998 to uphold an industrial tribunal decision on a preliminary point that it had jurisdiction to entertain a complaint by the employee, Frank McCoid, that the refusal to continue to recognise him as a shop steward for the Transport and General Workers Union was action taken against him "as an individual" contrary to section 146(1).

Mr John Bowers, QC and Mr Ian Gatt for Farnsworth; Mr Thomas Linden for Mr McCoid.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS said that the appeal turned on the meaning of the three words "as an individual" in section 146.

The issue which divided the parties was whether the action taken against the employee had been taken against him as a shop steward or as an individual.

On the facts his Lordship would instantly construe the words "as an individual" as applicable.

The employer claimed that the employee had been derecognised as a shop steward because the way that he had conducted himself meant that he was not suited to hold that office. The employee's version was that he had been victimised by his employer for legitimate trade union activities in his role of shop steward.

What was not in dispute was that the employee's terms of employment had not been affected by the employer's action. The only effect of the action was to deprive the employee of his status as a shop steward and the ability to perform the activities of a shop steward in relation to his fellow employees.

The employer had submitted that under section 146(1) there had to be action taken against an employee in his capacity as an employee and it was not sufficient if the action only related to his position as a shop steward.

His Lordship found that approach to be inconsistent with the general intent of section 146(1)(b) which was to allow an employee who had, as an individual, been subject to victimisation to complain to the industrial tribunal.

The employer's argument would have had no prospect of success but for the decision in *National Coal Board v Ridgway* ([1987] ICR 641) which concerned section 23(1)(a) of the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978 which, for present purposes, was not materially different from section 146 of the 1992 Act.

In that case there had been a dispute between the National Coal Board and the National Union of Mineworkers during which members of the Union of Democratic Mineworkers had been paid an increase in wages which did not apply to NUM members.

By a majority, the Court of Appeal came to the conclusion that NUM members had been affected as individuals because they had received less pay than members of the UDM, albeit that that was a consequence of the dispute between the NUM and the NCB.

Lord Justice Nicholls had said (at p658): "Adverse action taken against a union is not, by reason only of any consequential effect it may have on members or officers of the union, to be treated as action against individual employees. To be within the section the action has to affect the employee otherwise than merely qua member or officer of a union."

However, in his Lordship's judgment, that had to be understood in the context of the issue of fact that the court was there considering. There, action had been taken against the union but an individual had been seeking to make a complaint.

Here no action had been taken against the union as a union. The only action had been against the employee who happened to be a shop steward. That was action against an individual within section 146(1).

In *Ridgway*, Lord Justice Nicholls had been seeking to distinguish between action against a union, where there was no effect on individuals, from action against a union where individuals were affected in their position as employees. His Lordship did not see anything in *Ridgway* properly understood which was inconsistent with his first impression of section 146(1).

The employer had accepted that if its action had been against an individual it would still have a defence if it could establish the facts on which it relied.

The action would not then have been taken for the purpose of preventing or deterring the employee from taking part in the activities of an independent trade union but for the purpose of removing from the office of shop steward someone who was inappropriate to fulfil that role.

Therefore, his Lordship's interpretation of section 146(1) would not deprive the employer of a defence on the merits.

If the employer's interpretation had been right it would have meant that an employee who was a shop steward could be victimised and he would have no remedy before the industrial tribunal as long as the action taken was limited to affecting the employee in his capacity as a shop steward.

To be derecognised as a shop steward could be extremely damaging to an employee. It would be a serious reflection on his character. The intention of the Act was to provide a remedy in those circumstances.

Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Ward gave concurring judgments.

Solicitors: Dibb Lupton Alsop, Sheffield; Pattinson & Brewer.

Arbitrators erred in evaluating award

Danae Air Transport SA v Air Canada

Before Mr Justice Longmore

[Judgment February 8]

A mathematical error in an award on an arbitration agreement was an error of fact or law, and did not entitle the High Court to remit the award for reconsideration.

Mr Justice Longmore so held in the Commercial Court of the Queen's Bench Division when dismissing the application of Danae Air Transport SA that the arbitration award made in favour of Air Canada in October 1998 be remitted to the arbitrators under section 22 of the Arbitration Act 1950.

Mr Stephen Tomlinson, QC and Mr Philip Shepherd for the applicant; Mr Michael Collins, QC and Mr Vernon Flynn for the respondent.

MR JUSTICE LONGMORE said that a dispute arising from an agency agreement between the parties had been referred to arbitration. During the proceedings the respondent made an offer to settle in the form of a *Calderbank* letter (*Calderbank v Calderbank* ([1976] Fam 93)), which the applicant rejected. The offer was that the respondent would forgo its counter-claim and pay the applicant an additional sum.

At the conclusion of the proceedings, the arbitrators made an award to the applicant in respect of its claim, and made a lesser award to the respondent in respect of its counter-claim.

For the purposes of awarding costs, the arbitrators calculated the value of the *Calderbank* offer as the value of the counter-claim at the time plus the additional sum and calculated the value of the award to the applicant as the claim award minus the counter-claim award.

On that basis the rejected offer was worth more than the final award to the applicant, and the arbitrators awarded the applicant its costs up to the date of the *Calderbank* letter and awarded the respondent its costs thereafter. The applicant argued that the arbitrators had erred in evaluating the offer and the award, and so had awarded costs on a false basis.

His Lordship agreed that the arbitrators had erred in evaluating the offer. If it was right to deduct the amount of the counter-claim for the purposes of valuing the award it must be right to deduct the value of the counter-claim for the purposes of valuing the offer. On the correct method of calculation the offer would be worth less than the award.

Since the abrogation, by section 1(1) of the Arbitration Act 1979, of the High Court's common law jurisdiction to remit awards on the grounds of error of fact or law on the face of an award, the usual challenge to a costs award would be by way of appeal on a point of law.

The applicant's difficulty was that it could not appeal the costs award because of an exclusion agreement to that effect signed by both parties. In those circumstances, the applicant had applied under section 22 of the Arbitration Act 1950 for the award to be remitted to the arbitrators to be reconsidered and for another award of costs to be made.

The ambit of section 22 was narrow. As Mr Justice Hobhouse put it in *President of India v Jadranska Slobodna Plovidba* ([1992] 2 Lloyd's Rep 274), section 22 could only be invoked where there had been "some excess of jurisdiction, some distinct element of misconduct or procedural mishap, not simply some alleged unjudicial exercise of their discretion".

Mr Tomlinson submitted that the arbitrators had exercised their discretion on a false mathematical basis, which was neither an error of fact nor an error of law, and that such an exercise of discretion came within the ambit of section 22 as described by Mr Justice Hobhouse.

In his Lordship's judgment, the error did not constitute an excess of jurisdiction, nor a procedural mishap. Nor could counsel argue that by exercising their discretion on a false mathematical basis, the arbitrators had failed to exercise their discretion judicially and so misconducted themselves.

The essence of the applicant's submission was that the mathematical error was neither an error of fact nor of law, but in his Lordship's judgment that was unsustainable.

An error of mathematics was an error of fact or of law, and there was no "tertium quid" recognised but not abrogated by section 1(1) of the Arbitration Act 1979.

In these circumstances, if the applicant had not been excluded from appealing, his Lordship would have granted an application for leave to appeal on a point of law.

Solicitors: Brown Cooper; Dibb Lupton Alsop.

ROWING

Hunger the starter in university challenge

Rob Hughes meets the latest member of a family for whom the Boat Race has developed into an annual obsession

The race is addictive and for those who keep coming back, the burning question is whether defeat or victory is the greater spur. The final word on the 1998 Boat Race came from Andrew Lindsay: vanquished again, bodily spent, yet so defiant of spirit: "I'll be back to put it right."

A year on, after six winter months of training six hours a day for an event that may last no more than 16½ minutes, Lindsay is true to his word. Down the 170 years that the scholars of Oxford and Cambridge have contested the Boat Race, few could have defined the essence of perseverance more than this geography student who, in his final year at Oxford University, is thus on his final attempt to win the race. He is not alone, for in the bow of the Oxford boat, Charlie Humphreys is also seeking to break a cycle of two successive defeats.

Aberdeen

However, there is a current that runs deeper still in the Lindsay family tree, a dynastic trait, because his grandfather rowed for Cambridge in the 1930s and his uncle, Alexander Lindsay, was a beaten Oxford Blue in 1959, returning to conquer the event the next year. Indeed, that spirit of perseverance, that family reminder to Andrew Lindsay will reappear on the Thames at 1.30pm today when Uncle Alex takes part in the veterans' race, albeit that a man of 62 and his colleagues will be spared the gruelling last two miles after Hammersmith Bridge.

It is a long way down from the isle of Skye, close to where the Lindsays come from. You would not detect those origins from the Etonian vowels of the latest member of the clan to attempt the Boat Race, but the driving force is surely the same as that which permeated three generations of Lindsays.

"It doesn't feel like banging one's head against a brick wall," Andrew said on the banks of the Thames at Putney. "We're on line to sort this out. We have enough quality, enough proven winners in other events, to turn this thing around.

"For me, the first year was the worst. That felt like the ultimate depression. Last year, I managed to put it into perspective, and this year I'm going to share in a victory. I am certain of it."

He is not, this 6ft 1in, 14st 4lb athlete, a student who dabbles. He is dedicated to the ultimate experience and anyone who has derided the institution of the Boat Race is simply ignorant of the effort it takes. I almost wrote sacrifice, but Lindsay does not see it like that.

"I cannot have gone through three years at Oxford without rowing," he said. "I'm not someone who sees life as going from party to party, rising maybe at 12 noon the next day. In Boat Race terms it has, so far, been a losing experience, but it still has to be more fulfilling than just wasting part of the experience of Oxford."

The motivation, he believes, will be stronger in the Dark Blue boat. "I justify it this way, our advantage over Cambridge is that we are hungry for the victory," he said. "I recall that Jonathan Bull last year finished with the race, and understandably so, after reasoning that he had won the thing and been a member of the fastest crew in history. I would have been tempted to think the same. Everyone in the Oxford boat is driven to go and win this damn thing."

If you detect the influence of professional psychology here, you might be partially right. Oxford and Cambridge both employ a team psychologist. "But it is fairly limited," Lindsay said. "We know what we're coming for. It is in the nature of the beast. Rowers have a massive drive and if that wasn't there in the first place, we wouldn't go through all the effort."

You can feel, as he talks, that Lindsay, 22, is at ease with himself and his sport. His Oxford coach, Sean Bowden, has seen a change in Lindsay over the past 12 months that he said is the transition from youth to man. Yet the claim that somehow Oxford, through desire, have the advantage does not deeply impress Robin Williams, the successful coach to Cambridge.

"It still feels like all or nothing to us," Williams said. "The fear of defeat, the aim of trying to push the limits is motivation itself." And where is the spur for Brad Crombie, 28, the Canadian who is rowing for his third consecutive winning Boat Race? "Brad's motivation is that nobody wants to be a losing president," Williams said, "especially after Cambridge has won for six years. For all of us the inspiration is as fresh as if this were the first race ever held."

The talk, the verbal jousting, has gone on long enough. In both crews you sense nothing but the eagerness to turn their power into attainment on the Tideway. But for Andrew J. Lindsay there is something after the final race on Saturday.

"I want to complete my degree this summer and then attempt to make the Sydney Olympics," he said. "I have rowed in the World Cup. It doesn't compare for interest with the Boat Race."

Without false modesty, Lindsay acknowledges that he is at the peak of world rowing. "But I would not feel complete unless I became an Olympian," he said. "I wouldn't be put off if all of the IOC [International Olympic Committee] were accused of being bribed bureaucrats. I wouldn't be deterred if every competitor against us was drugged. The Olympics is still the ultimate experience." The taking part; a rounded scholar of sport indeed.

LINKS

The 1999 Boat Race will be rowed on April 3 (3.30pm) and covered live on BBC1
WEBSITE:
www.regatta.rowing.org.uk/BoatRace/
TODAY'S OUTINGS:
Oxford, 8am and 12.45pm; Cambridge, 1pm. Veteran Boat Race, 1pm

MARC ASPLAND



Lindsay hopes that it will be third time lucky on Saturday for the third generation of his family to seek glory on the Thames

Umpire promised an easier race to handle

By Mike Rosewell, rowing correspondent

MARK EVANS, the umpire of the Boat Race this year, will presumably make it clear at tomorrow's briefing, as umpires do every year, that he will not hesitate to use his powers to disqualify a crew if they impede the other.

In 1997, Tom Cadoux-Hudson issued 132 warnings in a classically tight race. Last year, Mike Sweeney had notched up 50 by Hammersmith before Cambridge broke clear. There has already been an informal meeting between representatives of both universities, with the coxswains present, to try to avoid the unthinkable.

Steve Royle, the Oxford rowing director, said: "It wasn't a meeting just about umpiring, it was about steering. There are no new rules and regulations. We are simply concerned about the image of the race." Robin Williams, the Cambridge coach, commented: "We want the coxswains to work with the umpire rather than test him."

Oxford showed the more impressive form in their Tideway outings yesterday, both in boat control and in terms of sheer pace.

Oxford's three minutes against Isis, no mean combination, began from a running start at the Bandstand on the flood tide. Isis were given the favourable Middlesex bend but both crews were far too close to the Middlesex bank off the start, which negated some of Isis's potential advantage. Colin von Ettingshausen, the German stroke, took Oxford off in blistering fashion and they finished some 3½ lengths ahead.

Cambridge put in two five-minute pieces and showed the occasional wobble. Harry Mahon, their final-week guru, talked them through virtually every stroke in their paddling between the rows and Williams admitted that more consistency was needed. But this is nothing new for Cambridge at the start of the final week.

MOTOR SPORT

Silverstone takes steps to resist takeover

By Kevin Eason

THE board of Silverstone today will launch a spirited defence against bids of up to £50 million to take over the home of British motor racing and rights to the British Grand Prix. Letters will arrive this morning on the doormats of the 834 members of the British Racing Drivers' Club (BRDC), which owns Silverstone, spelling out why they should not succumb to a series of tempting offers.

The main proposal is to set up a new company, geared to expand the circuit, with a 120-bedroom hotel and a much-needed bypass road, plus extra car parking. The BRDC, which includes Stirling Moss, Damon Hill and Richard Noble, the former world land speed record-holder, would hold a "golden share" in the new business in order to veto future takeover attempts.

The strategy unveiled yesterday remains high-risk, with Silverstone due to renegotiate its contract to hold the British Grand Prix with Bernie Ecclestone, the Formula One ringmaster. Silverstone holds the rights to the race until 2001 but Ecclestone is known to be unhappy with facilities at the Northamptonshire circuit, especially the traffic chaos at each race weekend.

Ecclestone is under pressure from race promoters all over the world anxious to replace Silverstone and other European venues on the Formula One calendar — particularly from the Far East, where lucrative tobacco sponsorship is still allowed. The first modern Formula One race was held at Silverstone in 1950 and the circuit retains a mystique with foreign drivers and teams.

John Lewis, a former Silverstone executive, is thought to have offered £41 million for Silverstone, coupled with radical redevelopment plans. However, Nicola Foulston, the ambitious chief executive of Brands Hatch, is thought to be waiting in the wings with a counter-offer, to add Silverstone to her portfolio of British racing circuits.

Accepting a full-blown bid now could reap as much as £50,000 for each member, although the BRDC's financial advisers, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, are warning against a quick sale. Instead, Silverstone's board wants a radical restructuring of the business, with the BRDC retaining control. Members can vote before the annual general meeting on April 23.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, bridge correspondent

The Netherlands has a reputation for staging some of the best events of the year. One of the jewels in its crown is the Forbo-Krommenie International Bridge Tournament that is held in Scheveningen, just outside The Hague, every February. The organisers invite experts from all over the world. This hand was played by Portugal's Miguel Goncalves and appeared on the front page of the French magazine *Le Bridgeur*.

Dealer East	N-S game	Teams
	♠ J 10 ♡ Q 2 ◇ A K J 10 7 3 ♣ J 10 2	
♠ 8 7 6 4 3 2 ♡ 5 ◇ 6 5 2 ♣ 9 8 4	N / W E / S	♠ Q 9 5 ♡ K 10 9 3 ◇ Q 9 4 ♣ K Q 7
	♠ A K ♡ A J 8 7 6 4 ◇ 8 ♣ A 6 5 3	

Contract: Three No-Trumps by South. Lead: eight of clubs.

Playing five-card majors East opened One Club after which Goncalves soon found himself in Three No-Trumps.

Declarer covered the opening lead with dummy's ten of clubs and when East played the queen he won the trick with the ace.

The opening bid marked East with all the missing high cards and the obvious plan would be to play on hearts, surrendering a trick to the king but hoping to make five tricks in the suit to go alongside two spades, at least two diamonds and a club.

Say declarer plays a low heart to dummy's queen at trick two. He will be fine unless he loses to a singleton king with East (he will later lose a trick to West's ten and risks losing three club tricks as well as two hearts). If, on the other hand, he first cashes the ace of hearts and the heart suit is distributed as it is here, East may duck the queen of hearts giving declarer insuperable entry problems.

Goncalves found an elegant solution to his problem that did not rely on a 3-2 break in hearts. At trick two he played a diamond to dummy's ace and continued with the king and jack of diamonds on which he discarded the ace and king of spades from his hand. East was able to win the third round of diamonds but was well and truly endplayed. Whichever suit he played would allow declarer to reach the dummy to enjoy the winning diamonds and subsequently finesse in hearts.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, chess correspondent

Even younger

At the same time that Murugan Thiruchelvam, 10, was inflicting defeat on grandmaster Jonathan Levitt, the even younger David Howell, 8, was winning the Spectrum Congress in Hove.

David was seeded 25th out of the 25 players competing, but ended up sharing first prize with 4/5. In the following game he defeats Dinah Norman, a former British women's champion.

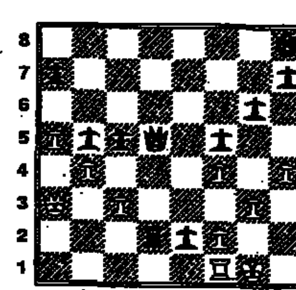
White: Dinah Norman
Black: David Howell
Hove 1999

Torre Attack

1	d4	Nf6
2	Nf3	g6
3	Bg5	Bg7
4	Nbd2	d5
5	e3	0-0
6	Be2	Nbd7
7	c3	Ne4
8	Nxe4	dxe4
9	Nd2	f5
10	Bc4+	Kh8
11	h4	Nf6
12	Bxf6	Bxf6
13	g3	c6
14	a4	e5
15	dxe5	Bxe5
16	Nb3	Qe7
17	Nd4	Rd8
18	Qc2	c5
19	Ne2	Be6
20	Bxe6	Qxe6
21	Rd1	Rxd1+
22	Qxd1	Qe7
23	Qb3	Rd8
24	0-0	Rd2
25	Re1	Qd7
26	Nf4	Bxf4
27	exf4	b6
28	a5	b5
29	Qa3	Qd5
30	b4	e3
31	Rf1	e2

White resigns

Diagram of final position



Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from *Times* readers will be published either here or in the Saturday *Times* Weekend column.

Times book

The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B. T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01797 369966 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

☐ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

TATTERDEMALION
a. A dandelion
b. A student riot
c. A careless dresser

UPLONG
a. A windmill strut
b. An Indonesian rice dish
c. A plunger for drains

TOHACK
a. An Amerindian
b. To cut up
c. A New Zealand bird

TARBOOSH
a. Nonsense
b. A sailor's mess
c. A hat

Answers on page 46

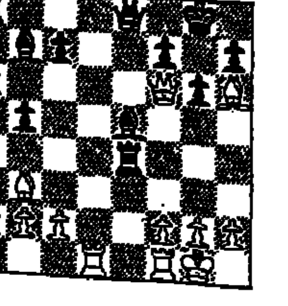
WINNING MOVE

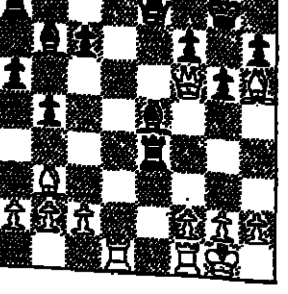
By Raymond Keene

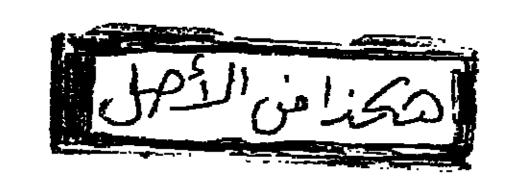
White to play. This position is from the game Berik — Kohn, Germany 1999.

White's bishops are doing an excellent job of constricting the black king. How did White demonstrate their power with a fine finish?

Solution on page 46







RACING: TRAINERS' TITLE BECKONS AFTER SANDOWN TREBLE BOLSTERS LEAD

Nicholls and Dines adding up

BY ALAN LEE
RACING CORRESPONDENT

FOR Paul Nicholls and his team, this bountiful jumping season cannot last long enough. After three more winners at Sandown Park yesterday, targets that would once have seemed fancifully presumptuous were brought sharply into focus both for the trainer and his precocious stable jockey.

Nichells moved £90,000 clear of Martin Pipe in an increasingly fascinating duel for the trainers' championship. Another £6,000 in prize-money will take him to the £1 million mark for the first time. Tizzard, meanwhile, requires ten more winners to beat Tony McCoy's record of 75 in a season as a conditional jockey.

With only 29 horses taking part, three fewer than the total of non-runners at Newbury on Saturday, this might have been a down-at-heel afternoon. It was rescued by Nicholls' enterprise in running five horses on ground firm enough to have scared off most of the opposition.

Nicholls walked the course before racing and said: "They have been very unkind to themselves. It is fast ground but there is no jar in it and I have no worries." Four of his five runners were odds-on favourites, and two were beaten, but Nicholls still ended the day a contented man and said he will not hesitate to send horses as far north as Perth and Ayr in search of the title.

Two of his winners, Linton Rocks and Distant Echo, were always in command but the first, Dines, rescued what seemed a lost cause after being left 25 lengths at the start. "He's a bit of a character and now and again he does that at home but he's never done it on a racecourse before," a relieved Nicholls said.

Tizzard, 19, deserved great credit for keeping his head on Dines, a horse he had never ridden before in public, and the horizons for him are now boundless. Next Saturday at Aintree, he partners Double Thriller, one of the shortest-priced Grand National favourites in recent years.

Nicholls described William Hill's quote of 7-2 as "ridiculous" but confirmed he could have three runners in the race if the ground dries out. "Belmont King wants good ground and we'll make a late decision. If the ground is right for him it may be wrong for Fiddling The Facts, in which case Mick Fitzgerald would be available. I have Robert Thornton on standby for Strong Chairman."

Rough Quest, winner of the National in 1996, will miss the race and run instead in the Aintree Foxhunters' Chase. Terry Casey, who trained Barhale Boy to overturn Nicholls' 3-1 on shot Irbee yesterday, admitted that he has lost his battle to recreate past glories. "We've run out of time and I am not going to abuse him," he said.

The main supporting race to the National, the Martell Aintree Hurdle, is shaping up to be a high point of the entire season after news yesterday that Venetia Williams may run both Stretarez and Lady Rebecca. The glittering opposition is likely to include Istabraq, French Holly, Barton and three runners from the Pipe yard, including the impressive winner of the Supreme Novices' Hurdle at Cheltenham, Hors La Loi III.

Sandown's feature event yesterday, the Royal Artillery Gold Cup, again eluded the Queen Mother, whose Braes Of Mar was third to Carlisle Bandito's, a rare chasing winner for Jack Berry. Owned by Mikey Heaton-Ellis, once a member of the same Artillery regiment as Berry, the winner was stylishly ridden by Lieutenant Alex Michael, 24, taking a few hours' leave from manoeuvres at his Lulworth base.

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



Dines, right, leads Circus Star over the last to initiate a treble for Tizzard and Nicholls at Sandown Park yesterday

National call-up for Wynne

STEVE WYNNE was yesterday given the mount on Coome Hill in the Martell Grand National on Saturday week. He has been booked by Bude permit-holder Walter Dennis to take the place of regular rider Jamie Osborne, who announced his retirement on Sunday.

"I have watched Steve on a number of occasions and he is a good horseman. He has a good length of leg, which you need as Coome Hill is a big horse," Dennis said.

Wynne, 26, will be having his first ride in the race. Coome Hill, the 1997 Hennessy winner, is quoted at 33-1 for the National by Ladbrokes, after being pulled up in the Hennessy and the Pertemps King George VI Chase on his last two starts.

[redacted]

ROB WRIGHT

2.05 In Question
2.40 Strong Vision
3.10 SUPREME CHARM (nap)
3.40 Kinnescash
4.15 Balanak
4.50 Strong Medicine
5.25 One Nation

Carl Evans: 4.50 Delight.

Timekeeper's top rating: 4.15 EQUITY'S DARLING.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM | TOTE JACKPOT MEETING | SIS

2.05 ROYAL ASCOT CRICKET CLUB NOVICES HURDLE
(£3,648: 2m 4f) (9 runners)

101	116	IN QUESTION 16 (S) (Winning Line) Miss V Williams 5-11-12	N Williamson	[illegible]
102	6-3011	MOONSHINE BAY 19 (S) (Mrs T Pilkington) J Gifford 5-11-12	P Hide	99
103	-31154	NATIVE RECRUIT 34 (G) (J Wright) D Nicholson 6-11-12	R Johnson	95
104	0312	COPPER COIN 25 (S) (W, M & Mrs E Robins) N Henderson 5-11-7	M A Fitzgerald	101
105	P11-	ASHMAN 350P (S) (M Jackson Bloodstock Ltd) Mrs S Smith 6-11-2	S Durack	–
106	413-56	BELISARIO 20 (S) (P Jacobs) N Graham 5-11-2	L Wyer	40
107	000PP	BROWNINGS BOY 33 (B Naylor) J Gifford 7-11-2	L Aspell	31
108		CATCHMENT 23F (Miss G Harwood) Mrs A Perrett 5-11-2	C Maude	–
109		PHILOSOPHIC 48F (Gallagher Equine Ltd) Mrs A Jewell 5-11-2	A Maguire	–

BETTING: 7-4 In Question, 7-2 Copper Coin, 4-1 Moonshine Bay, 9-2 Native Recruit, 8-1 Ashman, 20-1 Philosophic, 25-1 Belisario, Catchment, 66-1 Brownings Boy.

1998: JUST NIP 5-11-5 J A McCarthy (20-1) Mrs L Richards 20 ran

[illegible]

2.40 FAIRVIEW NEW HOMES NOVICES CHASE (BBC1)
(£11,568: 3m 110yd) (13 runners)

[illegible]

3.10 DAILY TELEGRAPH NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (BBC1)
(£13,810: 2m 3f 110yd) (6 runners)

[illegible]

3.40 BRITISH KIDNEY PATIENT ASSOC. HURDLE (SHOWCASE HANDICAP) (BBC1)
(£5,153: 2m 110yd) (15 runners)

[illegible]

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

101 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0 .... B West (7) 88

[illegible]

4.15 GREAT ORMOND STR. HOSPITAL CHILDRENS CHARITY HANDICAP HURDLE
(£5,198: 3m) (14 runners)

[illegible]

4.50 HAT AND PICTURE MAHONIA HUNTERS CHASE
(£2,879: 2m 3f 110yd) (15 runners)

[illegible]

5.25 WILD BOAR STANDARD NATIONAL HUNT FLAT
(£2,505: 2m 110yd) (14 runners)

[illegible]

14		ONE NATION (Earl Cadogan) Miss H Knight 4-10	[illegible]	

BETTING: 6-4 Barney Knows, 9-2 Jennypenny, 5-1 One Nation, 8- [illegible] Cool Lad, 14-1 Berewolf, Silver Streak, Macaw-Bay, Jenski, 25-1 others.

1998: KATES CHARM 5-11-1 Mr R Wakley (20-1) R J Price 22 ran

BARNEY KNOWS should prove a tough nut to crack. Chris Bonner's mount confirmed the promise he showed on his debut when beating Baccarat three lengths at Doncaster and was then far from disgraced when tenth, of 25, in the bumper at the Cheltenham Festival. None of the others to have seen the racecourse can boast anything like that level of form — including Macaw Boy (modest efforts to date), Boning Goring (shaped with some promise at Doncaster where he had Jenski held, behind) and The Puffin Man (type to do better in due course). Jennypenny and One Nation are newcomers worth noting in the market.

SPECIALISTS

ASCOT: Trainers: I Balding, 4 winners from 14 runners, 28.6%; D Gandolfo, 4 from 17, 23.5%, Miss V Williams, 4 from 18, 22.2%; K Bailey, 11 from 51, 21.6%; R Alner, 6 from 30, 20.0%, D Nicholson, 18 from 90, 20.0%; S Dow, 4 from 21, 19.0%. M Pipe, 15 from 83, 18.1%; P Nicholls, 4 from 29, 13.8%; Miss H Knight, 4 from 32, 12.5%; J Old, 4 from 32, 12.5%. Jockeys: A P McCoy, 28 winners from 102 rides, 27.5%, R Johnson, 11 from 44, 25.0%, N Williamson, 17 from 78, 21.8%, L Wyer, 3 from 15, 20.0%; C Maude, 6 from 32, 18.8%; A Maguire, 13 from 73, 17.8%. R Dunwoody, 20 from 117, 17.1%, L Aspell, 3 from 19, 15.8%; P Hide, 8 from 66, 12.1%, J A McCarthy, 3 from 25, 12.0%.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Ascot: 4.50 Canister Castle. Catterick: 2.50 Detroit City, Ryefield Star. Folkestone: 2.30 Going Places

CATTERICK

ROB WRIGHT

2.20 Westwood View
2.50 Scathebury
3.20 Once More For Luck
3.55 Rambo Waltzer (nb)
4.25 Strong Medicine
5.00 Fly Like A Bird

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) | SIS
DRAW: 5F-7F, LOW NUMBERS BEST

2.20 SPRINGTIME CLASSIFIED STAKES
(3-Y-O: £2,206: 5f) (9 runners)

[illegible]

2.50 FORCETT SELLING STAKES
(£2,024: 7f) (16)

[illegible]

3.20 WHORLTON HANDICAP
(£4,445: 1m 5f 175yd) (9)

[illegible]

3.55 GODS SOLUTION HANDICAP
(£4,887: 7f) (18)

[illegible]

4.25 TOYTOP MAIDEN STAKES
(£2,902: 6f) (14)

[illegible]

5.00 YARM HANDICAP
(3-Y-O: £2,635: 1m 4f) (10)

[illegible]

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: B Hills, 16 winners from 46 runners, 34.8%, T Barron, 12 from 54, 22.2%, J Berry, 27 from 148, 18.2%, M Johnston, 13 from 78, 16.7%, S C Williams, 3 from 18, 16.7% D Chapman, 5 from 31, 16.1%

JOCKEYS: R Mullen, 5 winners from 14 rides, 35.7%, S Copp, 4 from 13, 30.8%, K Fallon, 10 from 39, 25.6%, D Holland, 5 from 25, 20.0%, F Darley, 25 from 130, 19.2%, J Weaver, 11 from 61, 18.0%.

FOLKESTONE

ROB WRIGHT

2.00 Cowboys And Angels
2.30 Malibu Man
3.00 *The Whistling Teal*
3.30 Young-Un
4.05 Diplomat
4.40 Lennox
5.15 *Pial*

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.00 KHIBRAH (nap). 4.40 Lucky Nemo. 5.15 Secret Dell.

GOING: SOFT | DRAW: 5F-6F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST | SIS

2.00 HEADCORN MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES
(2-Y-O: £2,238: 5f) (9 runners)

[illegible]

2.30 ROCHESTER HANDICAP
(£2,207: 5f) (11)

[illegible]

3.00 ALDINGTON MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES
(3-Y-O: £2,408: 7f) (16)

[illegible]

3.30 LEVY BOARD HANDICAP
(£3,101: 7f) (16)

[illegible]

4.05 SHORNECLIFFE MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES
(3-Y-O: £2,219: 6f) (5)

[illegible]

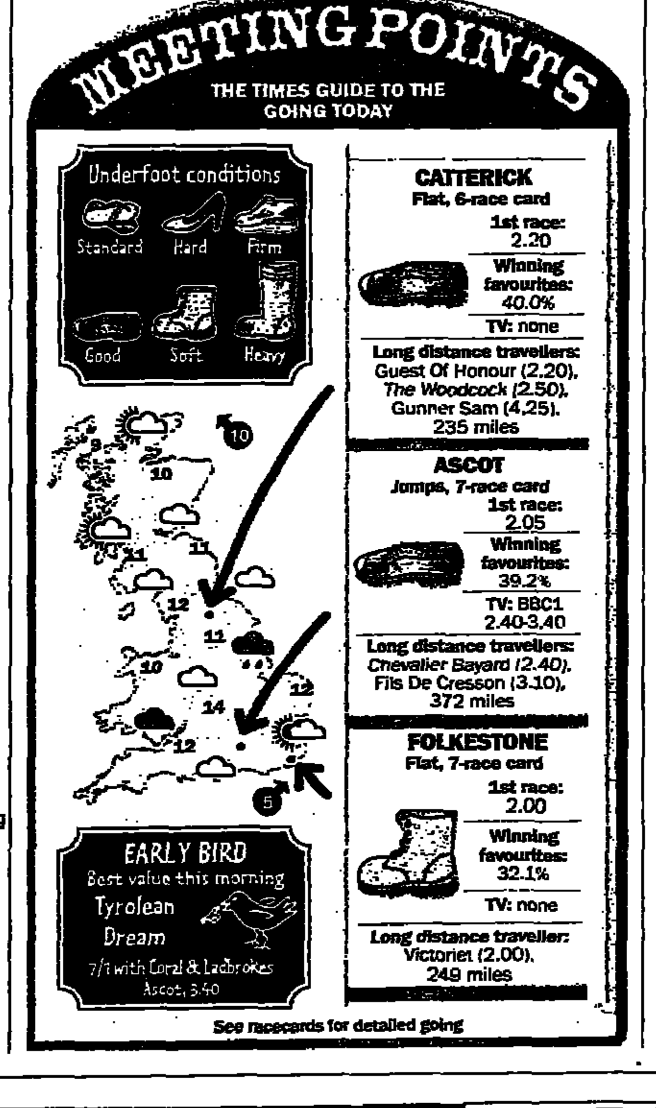
4.40 KINGSNORTH HANDICAP
(3-Y-O: £2,807: 1m 4f) (8)

[illegible]

5.15 ALKHAM HANDICAP
(3-Y-O: £3,028: 1m 1f 149yd) (14)

1–5	[illegible]		
6	005-	COMPTON AMICA 160 G A Butler 9-6	J F Egan 11
7	000-	BRAVE VISION 159 J Arnold 9-3	Martin Dwyer 9
8	630-	ERITH'S CHILL WIND 204 G L Moore 8-11	A Clark 4
9	000-	CATCH BALL 252 T Watson 8-10	S Sanders 13
10	000-	LADY MOORINGS 244 M Blanshard 8-4	J Quinn 1
11	6430	SATRIA 40 Miss G Kelleway 8-1	G Bardwell 6
12	625	LADY IRENE 32 T Naughton 8-0	P Doe (3) 14
13	000-	WELSH ASSEMBLY 170 G Enright 7-13	A Nicholls (5) 5
14	000-	CYMBAL MELODY 151 J Jenkins 7-12	A Whelan 7

3-1 Secret Dell, 7-2 L S Lowry, 8-1 Pial, Super Dolla, 10-1 others



YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Sandown Park

Going: good to firm, firm in places

2.00 *(2m ch)* 1, **DINES** (J Tizzard, 2-7 fav). 2, **Circus Star** (R Johnson, 3-1). 3, **Missed Call** (G Bradley, 25-1). 3 ran. 1½l, dist. P Nicholls at Shepton Mallet. Tote: £1.30. DF: £1.10. CSF: £1.42.

2.30 (2m 4f 110yd ch) 1, **BARHALE BOY** (A Thornton, 7-1). 2, **Irbee** (J Tizzard, 1-3 fav). 3, **Take Cover** (G Bradley, 20-1). ALSO RAN: 5 Pride Of The Sword. 4 ran. 4l, dist. T Casey at Upper Lambourn. Tote: £5.40. DF: £1.90. CSF: £9.76.

3.05 *(3m 110yd ch)* 1, **CARLISLE BANDITO'S** (*Mr A Michael*, 11-4). 2, **Court Melody** (Mr D Alers-Hankey, 10-11 fav). 3, **Braes Of Mar** (Major S J Robinson, 6-1). ALSO RAN: 12 Magnetic Reel, 14 Archies Oats (4th), 20 Witchris. 6 ran. *NR: Cabbery Rose, Spuffington.* 2½l, 19l, 21l. J Berry at Cockerham. Tote: £3.80; £1.80, £1.50. DF: £2.80. CSF: £5.47.

3.40 (3m 110yd ch) 1, **LINTON ROCKS** (J Tizzard, 7-2). 2, **Sharp Command** (S Kelly, 9-4 fav). 3, **Vicosa** (R Johnson, 16-1). ALSO RAN: 5-2 *Aller Moor*, 11-2 Ramallah (4th), 9 God Speed You (5th). 6 ran. 11l, 14l, dist, 6l. P Nicholls at Shepton Mallet. Tote: £4.30; £1.80, £1.90. DF: £4.40. CSF: £11.26.

4.10 *(2m ch)* 1, **DISTANT ECHO** (J Tizzard, 4-7 fav). 2, **Xalpete** (H Oliver, 11-4). 3, **Plunder Bay** (M A Fitzgerald, 4-1). 3 ran. 3½l, 12l. P Nicholls at Shepton Mallet. Tote: £1.50. DF: £1.60. CSF: £2.36.

4.45 (2m 4f 110yd ch) 1, ***MARCHING MARQUIS*** (Mr T Gibney, 4-1). 2, **King Torus** (Mr J Jukes, 10-11 fav). 3, **True Steel** (Mr J Trice-Rolph, 13-2). ALSO RAN: 9-2 Reign Dance (4th), 33 De Jordaan (5th), Silverton Lad, 66 Quick Silver Boy. 7 ran. NR: Ryton Run. ¾l, 4l, 4l, 19l. G Brown at Upper Lambourn. Tote: £4.60; £1.70, £1.40. DF: £3.20. CSF: £7.34.

Placepot: £76.80. Quadpot: £3.20.

3.20 (5f) 1, **Tom Tun** (T Williams, 7-2 fav). 2, Unshaken (8-1). 3, Marleamia (15-2). 4, Silk Cottage (20-1). 16 ran. ½l, nk. Miss J Craze. Tote: £4.00; £1.10, £2.10, £2.00, £6.50. DF: £21.00. CSF: £25.64. Tricast: £196.11.

3.55 (3m ch) 1, **Flat Top** (C McCormack, 10-11 fav, **Rob Wright's nap**); 2, Weaver George (5-1). 3, Inch Way (12-1). 6 ran. 3½l, 17l. M W Easterby. Tote: £1.80; £1.50, £2.20. DF: £4.40. CSF: £5.90.

4.25 (7f) 1, **Little Amin** (J Weaver, 5-1). 2, Plutocrat (5-6 fav); 3, Calico Lady (50-1). 8 ran. NR: Precious Moments. 3l, 3l. J Bethell. Tote: £6.20; £1.10, £1.10, £6.70. DF: £4.70. CSF: £9.27.

5.00 (2m 19yd) 1, **Old Hush Wing** (A Culhane, 4-1). 2, Quezon City (100-30 fav). 3, Swiftway (10-1). 11 ran. 6l, 1l. Mrs M Reveley. Tote: £5.50; £1.30, £1.40, £3.70. DF: £9.70. CSF: £16.06. Tricast: £113.70.

Jackpot: £2,204.90.

Placepot: £6.10. Quadpot: £3.80.

Newcastle

Going: good to soft

2.15 (5f) 1, **Kingston Bill** (T Sprake, 7-4 fav). 2, Kashra (2-1). 3, Red Sun (7-2). 6 ran. 2½l, 1¼l. W G M Turner. Tote: £2.00; *£1.10, £1.50. DF: £2.40. CSF: £4.80.*

2.45 (2m 4f hdle) 1, **Ryalux** (B Harding, 5-4 fav, **Timekeeper's top rating**). 2, Gus Cunningham (12-1). 3, High Pyrenees (2-1). 11 ran. 7l, nk. M Hammond. Tote: £2.00; £1.20, £1.50, £1.20. DF: £12.40. CSF: £14.88.

SPECIALISTS

FOLKESTONE: Trainers: N Callaghan, 8 winners from 30 runners, 26.7%, J Dunlop, 12 from 47, 25.5%, C Horgan, 7 from 34, 20.6%; P Hedger, 3 from 15, 20.0%, S C Williams, 8 from 41, 19.5%, D Arbuthnot, 5 from 28, 17.9%. **Jockeys:** N Callan, 5 winners from 11 rides, 45.5%, M Hills, 8 from 20, 40.0%, R Hughes, 7 from 46, 15.2%, T Quinn, 19 from 129, 14.7%, W Ryan, 5 from 34, 14.7%, C Rutter, 8 from 55, 14.5%



Wales seek to write chapter on success in Europe

From Russell Kempson in Zurich

AS THE main Welsh press party flew here from Heathrow yesterday, its more intellectual members were treated to a fascinating article in British Airways' in-flight magazine. It was plugged in the contents section as "The Briton Files: Wales — more than just leeks and sheep".

A nice little read it was, too, encapsulating everything you have ever wanted to know about the Principality from Tom Jones, the groin-thrusting singer, to its political history, picturesque fishing villages and long tradition of playing rugby union. Even Brown's pub in Laugharne, where Dylan Thomas apparently got "spaced out", stood on the tables and recited his stuff, got a mention.

There was not a jot, though, on the Wales football team, which takes on Switzerland in the Letzigrund Stadium in a European championship qualifying match here this evening. Ryan Giggs, Ian Rush and John Toshack may have been listed in the "sports stars" table, but of Bobby Gould's resurgent side — Giggs is again absent because of injury — there was nothing.

Not that they merited inclusion, having achieved little of note in recent years bar heaping ridicule on those who prefer the round-ball game. Until now, that is, after back-to-back victories against Denmark and Belarus last year. If Wales should triumph tonight, confirming their second place in group one behind Italy, it will be the first time that they have won three successive competitive games in 19 years.

Despite a five-month break, Gould, the manager, and Graham Williams, his assistant, sense a carry-over effect from those heady evenings in Copenhagen and Cardiff.

"It's a bit like darts," Gould said. "The lads arrived at the training camp last week, I said 'game on' and it's been brilliant since then. There was a lovely picture in the paper here, with everyone smiling and looking really happy. It's like the spirit Kevin Keegan seemed to have brought to the England squad last week."

Uncharacteristically, Gould declined to announce his line-up. However, although John Hartson, the now slimline Wimbledon striker, was initially expected to return up front, the manager is likely to retain Nathan Blake and Dean Saunders, who have played together in the past three matches.

SWITZERLAND (possible: 3-4-3): M Brunner (Lausanne) — R Wicky (Werder Bremen), S Henchoz (Blackburn Rovers), M Hodel (FC Zurich) — S Jeanneret (Servette), J Vogel (Grasshopper Zurich), C Sforza (Kaiserslautern), S Fournier (Servette) — P Muller (Grasshopper Zurich), S Chapuisat (Borussia Dortmund), A Comisetti (Grasshopper Zurich).

WALES (possible: 3-5-2): P Jones (Southampton) — K Symons (Fulham), G Speed (Newcastle United), C Coleman (Fulham) — J Robinson (Charlton Athletic), A Johnson (Nottingham Forest), M Hughes (Southampton), R Savage (Leicester City), M Pembridge (Benfica) — N Blake (Blackburn Rovers), D Saunders (Benfica).

Referee: M Liba (Czech Republic).

GROUP ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	3	3	0	0	6	1	9
Wales	3	2	0	1	5	5	6
Switzerland	3	1	1	1	2	3	4
Denmark	4	0	2	2	2	4	2
Belarus	3	0	1	2	2	4	1

FIXTURES: Today: Switzerland v Wales, Italy v Belarus. June 5: Italy v Wales, Denmark v Belarus. June 9: Switzerland v Italy, Wales v Denmark. Sept 4: Belarus v Wales, Denmark v Switzerland. Sept 8: Switzerland v Belarus, Italy v Denmark. Oct 9: Wales v Switzerland, Belarus v Italy

Keegan must be saved for when it really matters

MIDWEEK VIEW



Simon Barnes
Sports feature writer of the year

After the tumultuous events of the weekend, there is only one conclusion to draw. Keegan must go. That way, England have a very decent chance of winning the 2002 World Cup. It won't happen if Keegan stays in office.

Keegan's gorgeous, compelling newbroomery takes me back to my Hong Kong days and to Ernesto Barba, who was once called "The Fellini of the Hotel Industry" by *Playboy*. I attended a hotel launch of his in Taipei and it was every bit as glorious as the Coming of Kevin.

You have never seen such a lavish event, such devoted trained-to-the-second staff, such excellent food, such quantities of drink. Both the shareholders and the journalists — the hardest parts of the audience to please — were purring.

About a year later, I had an invitation to another hotel opening in Taipei. Ernesto again. He had been sacked or resigned or walked out or got bored or thrown a tantrum. And another hotel chain snapped him up. And of course I went: the same thing all over again, if better.

A few months later, Ernesto was in Hong Kong, looking for a job. Confidence, of course, sky-high. We had a drink, a talk about hotels he had known. Always the same pattern: the glorious start, the souring of the dream, the parting of the ways. The fact of the matter, blindingly obvious, is that Ernesto and Keegan are Start-Up Guys. This is a clear category of talent: the exact *opposite of the Housekeeper*. Naturally, there is a substantial overlap in the Venn diagram that represents these two areas of ability: most people can do a bit of newbroomery, a bit of routine maintenance.

'It is obvious Kevin is a Start-Up Guy'

But out on the edge, you find the pure Start-Up Guys: people such as Ernesto and Keegan. So long as there is something new, they will fling themselves at it dauntlessly. When it comes to the dull plodding details of keeping the whole damn thing going, their attention wanders.

Keegan arrived to manage Newcastle United and was called a Messiah. Those that did so forgot that the task of a Messiah is to inspire, to start things up. The running of the Church is what the Messiah hands on to a disciple.

Newcastle's climb to the top of the FA Carling Premiership was something that Keegan was able to do in a series of start-ups. But the final push required other virtues, and Keegan's lack of them saw him lose that 12-point lead. The crucial mistake was the classic Start-Up Guy's error.

Keegan forgot the classic Housekeeper's Rule: if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

So he brought in the brilliant Faustino Asprilla to bolster an attack that needed no bolstering. Keegan could not resist the lure of the new, the exotic, the altogether fabulous. A dull consolidation would have won the title: but that is not the way of the Start-Up Guy.

It will be the same at Fulham, and it will be the same with England if Keegan becomes the country's full-time coach. A four-match term is not too short: it is exactly right. With a mixture of luck and his Start-Up Guy talent, England look a decent bet to qualify for Euro 2000. Once that is done, send in a housekeeper.

The European championship is too base a tournament to bother the likes of Kev with. Let a housekeeper do his best with it, and then let the housekeeper supervise qualification for the World Cup of 2002. I suggest George Graham for this job. A bit Scottish, I know, but I see no clash of interest there, not unless England are drawn against Norway.

But then, say, two weeks before England go to the World Cup finals — send for Kev. Unjaded, unirked by media criticism, he will come in on his favourite Messianic wave, and start up from scratch.

'A four match term is exactly right'

I know that World Cups are supposed to be won on four years' meticulous preparation, but that be damned for a manager's myth. World Cups are won by last-minute inspiration. They are won by the team that gets on a roll: the team that gets the Force going with it. The Force is something that builds in pre-tournament and the qualifying group, and expands into a soul-deep conviction over the closing rounds. It is a very Keegan sort of thing.

But the routines of qualification, the setbacks, the criticism crisis are not for him. He is a man made for crisis, a man who needs an occasion to rise to. He can supervise a sparkling World Cup campaign, but only by redefining the role of the England manager/coach. Which is why he is trying to do exactly that.

Keegan has the potential to become a living national treasure. Let him have his crack at gaining England qualification for Euro 2000, then wrap him up in Fulham, and his horses, and bring him out again for the summer of 2002. Then let the Start-Up Guy start.

FOOTBALL: CZECH REPUBLIC PRESENT FORMIDABLE OBSTACLE TO AMBITIONS OF BROWN AND McALLISTER

Scotland inspired by home thoughts

By Kevin McCarra

THE Scotland side, like a gauche heir, will have to mature quickly if it is not to squander a great inheritance. In the leading tournaments, the national team have not been beaten at home since February 1987, when Ireland overcame them. This evening, against the Czech Republic at Celtic Park in a European championship qualifying match, that distinction could be lost unless expertise is improvised at short notice.

The line-up is not especially young, but the inexperience is marked, particularly in attack, where Neil McCann, whose only previous cap was earned as a substitute, will fill an important role. For once, complaints about injuries are not admissible. A few familiar names are absent, but they have reached the age where no manager can take their fitness for granted.

It is up to others to summon up the verve that has filled their predecessors on days such as this. A fiery win over Austria, for example, was instrumental in securing Scotland's qualification for the 1998 World Cup and the game tonight has the same pivotal significance. The Czech Republic, with one more match played, are five points ahead of Craig Brown's team.

It is a lead that needs to be trimmed if Scotland are to win group nine and Gary McAllister, the captain, was intent, politely, on cutting the opposition down to size yesterday. Reviewing men previously encountered in the FA Carling Premiership, he dispelled any idea that they possess aloof excellence.

GROUP NINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Rep	4	4	0	0	10	2	12
Scotland	3	2	1	0	5	3	7
Lithuania	4	1	2	1	4	4	5
Estonia	4	1	1	2	9	8	4
Bosnia-Herz	4	1	1	2	5	8	4
Faeroe Isles	5	0	1	4	1	9	1

FIXTURES: Today: Lithuania v Estonia, Scotland v Cz Rep. June 5: Bosnia-Herzegovina v Lithuania, Estonia v Cz Rep; Faeroe Isles v Scotland. June 9: Estonia v Lithuania; Faeroe Isles v Bosnia-Herzegovina; Cz Rep v Scotland. Sept 4: Bosnia-Herzegovina v Scotland, Faeroe Isles v Estonia, Lithuania v Cz Rep. Sept 8: Cz Rep v Bosnia-Herzegovina; Faeroe Isles v Lithuania, Estonia v Scotland. Oct 9: Estonia v Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cz Rep v Faeroe Isles; Scotland v Lithuania.

"Patrik Berger is a bit-player at Liverpool," McAllister said. "He's talented, but he struggles to find a place in the line-up. Karel Poborsky was the same when he was at Manchester United. Because of Euro 96, they became household names, but none of us are in awe of them."

The Coventry City midfield player has not represented his country since November 1997 and a cruciate ligament injury put his career in doubt. Brown caught a glimpse of McAllister's fanatical desire to recover when he came across his captain exercising in the gym on Sunday evening. "The rowing machine was red hot," the manager said.

So scant are the resources in attack that McAllister, with five goals, is the leading scorer in the squad. Brown does not have available a single player who is an unalloyed forward.

McCann is a winger and he will be partnered by either Eoin Jess, a deep-lying attacker, or Allan Johnston, another winger. Brown hopes to see his side outmanoeuvre a stolid rearguard and, in a key engagement, will have to find the correct player to apply pressure on Berger when Scotland advance on the right.

"We have to get the fans on our side by starting with intent," McAllister said. "We will try and show composure, but at a British pace. We did that against Austria, but it wasn't just fast and furious then. There was good football mixed in with it."

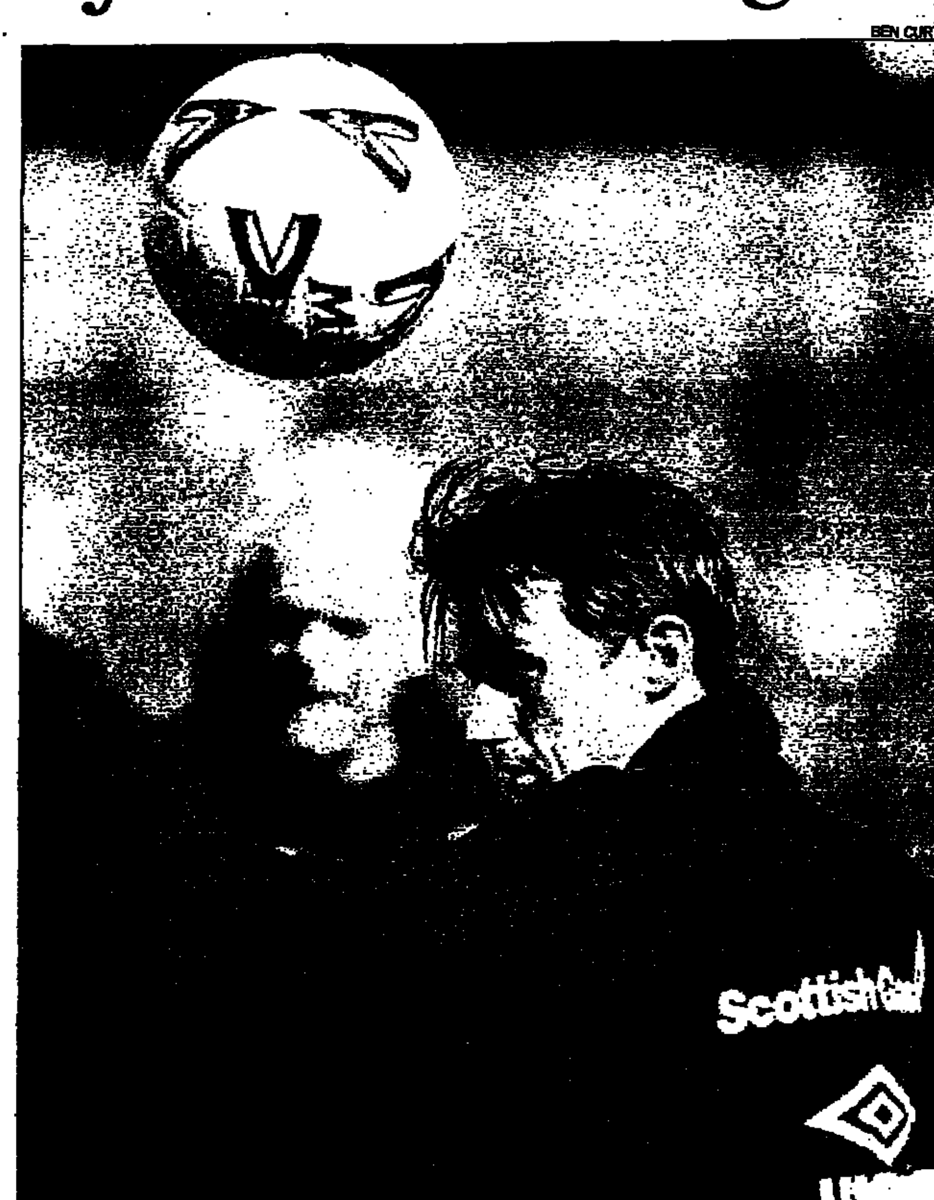
The visiting team had little to say yesterday, claiming, wrongly, that Brown had given offence by branding them as cheats. It was a spurious controversy given that the Scotland manager is an inveterate diplomat. In an earlier fixture in group nine, Jozef Chovanec's team scored when the Faeroe Isles were expecting the ball to be returned to them, having put it into touch to allow treatment to an injured player. That, however, was an isolated incident.

The Czechs suspect that the Scotland defence is unsound and Brown's side, too, are bent on aggression. Wounded feelings will scarcely merit comment on an occasion when each country has the chance to do serious damage to the other's prospects.

SCOTLAND (possible, 3-5-2): N Sullivan (Wimbledon) — D Weir (Everton), M Elliott (Leicester City), T Boyd (Celtic) — D Hopkin (Leeds United), C Burley (Celtic), P Lambert (Celtic), G McAllister (Coventry City), C Davidson (Blackburn Rovers) — N McCann (Rangers), E Jess (Aberdeen).

CZECH REPUBLIC (possible, 3-5-1-1): P Srnicek (Sheffield Wednesday) — M Hornak (Sparta Prague), J Suchoparek (Strasbourg), T Votava (Sparta Prague) — K Poborsky (Benfica), M Hasek (Sparta Prague), P Nedved (Lazio), J Nemec (Schalke 04), P Berger (Liverpool) — V Smicer (Lens) — P Kuka (Nuremberg).

Referee: K Nielsen (Denmark).



BEN CURTIS

McCann prepares for any heading opportunities that may come his way tonight

Quinn on standby to bolster attack

From George Caulkin in Chisinau

IN ITS former guise as a satellite of the Soviet Union, Moldova was perhaps best known for keeping the wine cellars of the Kremlin fully stocked. It did not come as a significant surprise, therefore, to scent the faint bouquet of sour grapes wafting from the streets here yesterday.

There was nothing as tangible as outright controversy, but rather the froth that bubbles to the surface when desperate sides prepare to face each other. The hosts are clamped to the foot of group three, while Northern Ireland must win tonight to revive hopes of reaching the European championship finals.

It was in this fractious atmosphere that a spy from the Moldovan Football Association was spotted at a Northern Ireland training session yesterday. Defeat against Moldova would almost certainly bring a premature close to Northern Ireland's qualifying campaign and doubts would inevitably be raised about Lawrie McMenemy's future as manager.

"We've got to get support to Iain Dowie without weakening other areas of the team," McMenemy admitted. A recall for James Quinn, the West Bromwich Albion striker, is a strong possibility.

MOLDOVA (possible, 4-5-1): S Dinov (Constructorul Chisinau) — S Stroenco (Tiligul Tiraspol), O Fistican (Zimbru Chisinau), A Guzun (Torpedo Zaporotzhzhya), S Diacenu (Zimbru Chisinau) — V Gaidamasciuc (Serif Tiraspol), I Oprea (Zimbru Chisinau), R Rebeja (Zimbru Chisinau), S Epureanu (Zimbru Chisinau), G Stratulat (Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk) — S Clescenco (Zimbru Chisinau).

NORTHERN IRELAND (probable, 4-4-2): M Taylor (Fulham) — D Patterson (Dundee United), M Williams (Chesterfield), S Morrow (Queens Park Rangers), K Horlock (Manchester City) — K Gillespie (Blackburn Rovers), N Lennon (Leicester City), S Lomas (West Ham United), M Hughes (Wimbledon) — I Dowie (Queens Park Rangers), J Quinn (West Bromwich Albion).

Referee: E Trivkovic (Croatia)

GROUP THREE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Turkey	4	3	0	1	7	3	9
Germany	3	2	0	1	6	2	6
Finland	3	2	0	1	6	4	6
N Ireland	4	1	1	2	3	8	4
Moldova	4	0	1	3	5	10	1

FIXTURES: Today: Germany v Finland, Moldova v Northern Ireland. June 4: Germany v Moldova. June 5: Finland v Turkey. June 9: Moldova v Finland. Sept 4: Finland v Germany; Northern Ireland v Turkey. Sept 8: Germany v Northern Ireland; Moldova v Turkey. Oct 9: Germany v Turkey; Finland v Northern Ireland.

INTERNATIONAL sport is a very confused place if those in authority can sit in safe Swiss houses firing broadsides at players who fail to separate themselves from also being men. There were 17 Euro 2000 qualifying games last weekend, another 15 are scheduled for tonight, and half a dozen have been postponed because *it is unsafe to put players into* the air in or around the Balkans.

Pause for thought as sport goes on

By Rob Hughes

How astonishing, then, that Uefa has cautioned, even threatened, Serbia internationals who, being ordinary men, have protested against Nato bombs falling around their family homes. Sasa Curcic, with his nightly vigil in Downing Street and his banner protest at Selhurst Park on Sunday, has been warned. Predrag Mijatovic, whose instincts and precision won the European Cup for Real Madrid, has said: "I cannot play football until my family emerge from the cellar."

And there are others, in France, Spain and England, who share what surely, whatever the rights and wrongs of the conflict, are human reactions. Mercenary footballers they may be, but still they are men, of conscription age, adrift from their cause, and origins at the most emotional time of their lives. Sport has to be put into context.

Of course Germany, having restored some virtue with the three-goal victory in Belfast, now talk only of keeping the shape of the team, a 3-4-3 variation on their old style.

Of course the Germans, the European champions, are anxious to show their home crowd in Nuremberg that the descent of German might is arrested.

"Germany played really well in Northern Ireland, and seized what few chances they had," Richard Moeller Nielsen, the Finland coach, observed. "But we have a strong team, and we go to Nuremberg rather optimistic." Indeed Finland, with a physical side built around the predatory finishing of Jari Litmanen, do expect to examine Germany, particularly in the air.

In France, at Stade de France, there is another human experience. Youri Djorkaeff, in the absence again of Zinedine Zidane, will attempt to assert himself as the catalyst to victory against Armenia. An interesting night for him, for his mother is Armenian and his father, Jean, who also played for France, last year considered accepting the post as coach to Armenia.

After being held by the impressive Ukraine side to a goalless draw, France need to beat Armenia. And Djorkaeff needs to be the playmaker.

Italy needs just to keep on doing what has come naturally since Dino Zoff took over the coaching role after the World Cup. They have won every game, yet Zoff is being criticised because his team appears cautious. He should worry. With Filippo Inzaghi augmented by Francesco Totti, the AS Roma striker, and Roberto Baggio lurking in reserve, Italy will surely dispose of Belarus in Ancona without Zoff turning a hair.

In Moscow, the Russia national team should crush Andorra. But the match is being played in the capital because, again, dreadful reality of modern life impinges on sport. *It should have been in* Vladikavkaz, but a bomb there killed 62 people ten days ago. The people of Vladikavkaz, who need sport as much for relief as anything else, will get a game ... between veteran players from North Ossetia and Georgia in their 40,000-seat stadium. The bomb is a tool of war, but sport is a reflection that life goes on.

United defend price rise

MARTIN EDWARDS, the chairman and chief executive of Manchester United, last night defended the above-average rise in ticket prices at Old Trafford next season. The move is being planned to offset a fall in profits.

United reported pre-tax profits of £11.1 million in the six months prior to January 1999, compared to £15.4 million for the same period last year. From next season, there is expected to be an across-the-board rise of £2 for tickets for each match.

The increase has angered many supporters and Lee Hodgkiss, of the United Independent Supporters' Association, said: "Players are taking money out of the game, shareholders are taking money out of the game, and it is the fans who are expected to keep putting it back in."

The club confirmed that the fall in profits was because of players' wages increasing by £3 million in the six-month period under review. "We are still near the bottom of the league as far as ticket prices are concerned," Edwards said. "Some London clubs charge twice as much as we do."

Edwards confirmed yesterday that Peter Schmeichel, the United goalkeeper, was standing by his decision to leave Old Trafford at the end of the season.

Schmeichel announced last November, during a run of poor form, that he wanted to retire from English football in the summer, arguing that the demands of the FA Carling Premiership were becoming too great.

However, he has since recovered his previous dominance during the team's unbeaten run that stretches back to the end of last year and it was thought that Alex Ferguson, the manager, might have been able to persuade him to change his mind.

"He is going to play abroad, and nothing has changed," Edwards said.

Liverpool are hopeful that Michael Owen and Robbie Fowler will be fit for the Merseyside derby at Anfield on Saturday. Both withdrew from the England squad to play Poland last week because of injury but Gérard Houllier, the Liverpool manager, said: "They should be doing some ball work today and if that is successful, we should have them available."

Craig Moore, the Australia defender, who left Rangers for Crystal Palace last October for a fee of £800,000, is close to a return to Ibrox.

Talks are under way between Rangers and John Viola, the player's agent, with a view to finalising a new four-year contract for a player that Dick Advocaat, the Rangers manager, was sorry to lose.

"It's not an easy deal," Viola said. "But I'm sure it will be finalised and Craig is delighted at the prospect of being on his way back to Ibrox. There are still one or two items to be cleared up, but we are optimistic a deal can be completed soon."

By Stephen Wood

Nigeria tries to ease fears

By Our Sports Staff

WITH all the doubts that have been expressed by club managers in England during the build-up, the world's best young footballers have plenty of excuses for pre-tournament nerves as they prepare for the Fifa world youth championship, which starts in Nigeria on Saturday.

The authorities in the host country have done their best to allay fears about safety and a poster in Lagos, reputed to be one of the most dangerous cities in the world, proclaims: "Nigeria Welcomes The World". Whether that will calm the nerves of the under-20 footballing elite from 24 countries, including England and Ireland, is doubtful, however.

The tournament opens in the capital's National Stadium, when Nigeria take on Costa Rica in the first of 52 scheduled matches, and will mark the fulfilment of the dreams of a nation finally to host a leading competition. But no matter how devoted to football the people of Lagos are, many others in Nigeria believe that the country cannot afford the £70 million that it has cost to upgrade the eight stadiums being used.

With Nigeria's economy in crisis, a country that in the 1970s was among the 50 wealthiest in the world is now ranked the thirteenth poorest. Its infrastructure is crumbling, education has been in decline for years and the health system is starved of funds. Power supplies are erratic at best and telecommunications notoriously bad.

To answer health concerns, Fifa, the world governing body, has put in place a wide range of medical provisions, including specially trained personnel and the provision for seriously injured or sick players to be evacuated. To ensure security, the Government has brought in 4,000 specially trained policemen to be deployed *around the stadiums* and hotels where teams and officials will be staying.

"People should not expect the world. We are a developing country. But we will be well-organised. They will be amazed," Paul Bassey, the national media officer for the Fifa local organising committee, said.

"We will organise a great championship. We will show that we could organise a full World Cup. What we want now is for the thing to start. It is time for the football."

SCHEDULE

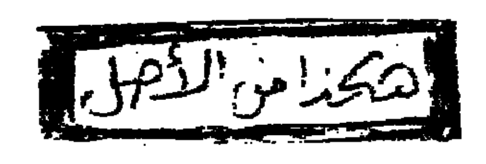
Group A: Apr 3: Nigeria v Costa Rica. Apr 4: Germany v Paraguay. Apr 7: Nigeria v Germany, C Rica v Paraguay. Apr 10: Nigeria v Paraguay, C Rica v Germany. Group B: Apr 4: Croatia v Ghana; Argentina v Kazakhstan. Apr 7: Argentina v Ghana, Croatia v Kazakhstan. Apr 10: Argentina v Croatia, Ghana v Kazakhstan. Group C: Apr 4: Australia v Saudi Arabia, Mexico v Ireland. Apr 7: Australia v Mexico, Ireland v S Arabia. Apr 10: Australia v Ireland, Mexico v S Arabia. Group D: Apr 5: Mali v Uruguay, Portugal v South Korea. Apr 8: Mali v Portugal, S Korea v Uruguay. Apr 11: Mali v S Korea, Portugal v Uruguay. Group E: Apr 5: Cameroon v Japan, England v United States. Apr 8: Cameroon v England, Japan v US. Apr 11: Cameroon v US, England v Japan. Group F: Apr 5: Brazil v Spain, Honduras v Zambia. Apr 8: Brazil v Honduras, Spain v Zambia. Apr 11: Brazil v Zambia, Honduras v Spain. Second round: Apr 14, 15: Group winners, runners-up and best four third-placed teams. Apr 18: Quarter-finals. Apr 21: Semi-finals. Apr 24: Final

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Runs to Resort	Conditions Off/p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Andorra								
Soldeu	70	80	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	1	28/3
Austria								
Kitzbühel	10	156	Good	Worn	Varied	Cloud	4	23/3
Obergurgl	40	270	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	6	28/3
St Anton	70	480	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	4	24/3
Canada								
Lake Louise	146	159	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	-6	27/3
France								
Alpe d'Huez	153	350	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	16	28/3
Avoriaz	240	260	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	2	28/3
Flaine	125	570	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	-3	28/3
La Clusaz	30	260	Good	Slushy	Varied	Sun	2	28/3
La Plagne	170	250	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	6	28/3
La Tania	101	259	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	8	27/3
Les Arcs	122	335	Good	Open	Powder	Fine	10	28/3
Méribel	60	230	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	6	27/3
Tignes	142	280	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	5	27/3
Val Thorens	120	250	Good	Open	Powder	Fine	8	27/3
Val d'Isère	120	240	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	5	28/3
Italy								
Cortina	25	100	Good	Slushy	Varied	Cloud	3	27/3
Livigno	64	200	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	7	28/3
Norway								
Geilo	110	110	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-4	26/3
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	45	290	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	5	28/3
Davos	135	295	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	5	22/3
Grindelwald	50	300	Good	Slushy	Heavy	Fine	9	27/3
Klosters	90	290	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	0	22/3
St Moritz	50	100	[illegible]	Worn	Varied	Sun	5	27/3
Verbier	65	385	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	7	28/3
Wengen	50	180	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	8	27/3
Zermatt	60	260	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	4	27/3
United States								
Aspen	125	145	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	15	27/3
Deer Valley	205	235	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	12	22/3

http://www.skiclub.co.uk L = lower slopes, U = upper slopes



McGrath fights back after West Indies captain leads the charge

Lara's resistance tests Australia

FROM PAT GIBSON
IN BRIDGETOWN
BARBADOS

AUSTRALIA showed why they are the champions of world cricket yesterday by overcoming all manner of problems to withstand a brilliant century by Brian Lara, the West Indies captain and inspiration, and move to the brink of the victory that would make sure that they retain the Frank Worrell Trophy.

Only three times in their previous 350 Tests have West Indies scored more than 300 to win but they seemed capable of doing it in this third Test when Lara and Jimmy Adams, roared on by a frenzied Kensington Park crowd, were putting on 133 in just under three hours for the sixth wicket.

They were still 70 runs short of their victory target of 308, however, when Glenn McGrath, summoning up his last reserves of energy like the great fast bowler he is, squared up Adams and burst through his defence to bowl him.

Two overs later, McGrath had Ridley Jacobs and Nehemiah Perry leg-before to give himself five wickets in an innings for the fourth time in the series and leave West Indies close to defeat at 248 for eight.

So Lara's stupendous performance, which took him to his twelfth Test century in 231 minutes with a six and 14 fours, looked like ending in glorious failure, but not before he had again exposed the flaws that are appearing in the facade of the Australia team.

One of them was acknowledged before play even began. It was revealed that Ian Healy, whose wicketkeeping as well as his batting seem to have gone into terminal decline on this tour, is suffering from sore calf muscles and Adam Gilchrist is flying from Australia to stand by to replace him in the fourth and final Test, starting in Antigua on Saturday.

It is described as a precautionary measure but the very fact that the talismanic Healy is contemplating missing a Test suggests that he himself believes that he is coming to the end of the road after 114 matches. He has missed only one match (because of a broken thumb) since making his Test debut in Pakistan in 1988 and played through all manner of injuries in accumulating a record 351 dismissals before this match.

West Indies were in for an early disappointment when Adrian Griffith, who had made 35 in more than three hours the day before to help to give West Indies a solid foundation, was out in the fifth over. He had scored only three when he got a ball that snaked between bat and pad to trap him leg-before.

Two overs later, Gillespie, for once outdoing Australia's champion fast bowler, Glenn McGrath, struck again to have Carl Hooper caught behind and West Indies' hopes were resting on Lara.

He did not let them down. He has been inspirational both as batsman and captain since putting the South African fiasco behind him and Adams, who seems to have been born to follow rather than to lead, gave him all the support he needed. They were helped in two ways. First, Gillespie, who was forced out of the 1997 England tour with a chronic back injury and missed the whole of the Ashes series this winter, had to leave the field with a strain in the same area.

Second, the two leg spinners, Shane Warne and Stuart MacGill, again failed to justify the faith that their captain, Steve Waugh, has in them, even though the pitch was turning extravagantly.

MacGill was first into the fray and Lara greeted him by hitting three fours in his first over.

For a while, Waugh did not even trust Warne to bowl at all, preferring to give himself his first spell of medium pace since Boxing Day, and when the great spinner did appear after lunch, Lara could not disguise his glee as a long hop sat up invitingly for him to pull for six.

That shot took Lara to 50 and seemed to release all the tension in him as he went on to take complete control. Waugh, forced to take the new ball himself because Gillespie was still off the field, was cut and pulled for fours and when the snarling McGrath put Lara on his back with a short ball that cannoned off his helmet to fine leg, the pair of them engaged in an angry confrontation that seemed to say it all.

McGrath's domination of Lara was one of the main reasons why Australia ended almost 20 years of West Indies supremacy in the Caribbean four years ago, but there was no doubt who was the master now. Not that McGrath was ever going to take it lying down.


Flying high: Gillespie celebrates having Hooper caught behind before being forced to leave the field with a recurrent back problem

BRIDGETOWN SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA: First Innings 490 (S R Waugh 199, R T Ponting 104, J L Langer 51). Second Innings 146 (C A Walsh 5 for 39)

WEST INDIES: First Innings 329 (S L Campbell 105, R D Jacobs 68)

Second Innings

S L Campbell lbw b McGrath	33
A F G Griffith lbw b Gillespie	35
D R E Joseph lbw b MacGill	1
P T Collins lbw b McGrath	0
*B C Lara not out	112
C L Hooper c Healy b Gillespie	6
J C Adams b McGrath	38
†R D Jacobs lbw b McGrath	5
N O Perry lbw b McGrath	0
C E L Ambrose not out	0
Extras (b 8, lb 11, w 1, nb 4)	24
Total (8 wkts)	254

C A Walsh to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-77, 2-77, 3-78, 4-91, 5-105, 6-238, 7-248, 8-248

BOWLING: McGrath 38-12-69-5. Gillespie 22-8-49-2; Warne 20-4-53-0; MacGill 20-6-45-1. S R Waugh 5-0-13-0

Umpires: E A Nicholls (West Indies) and D L Orchard (South Africa)

Test grounds dig in their heels on profit-sharing

Richard Hobson says a damaging dispute hangs over the new season

Lord MacLaurin of Knebworth will take charge of possibly the most contentious meeting since he became chairman of the England and Wales Cricket Board at Lord's today, for the Test-match grounds, threatening to refuse to stage five-day fixtures against New Zealand this summer unless the financial terms are improved, are standing firm.

Staging agreements for the four-match Test series due to begin on July 1 remain unsigned and the Test Match Grounds Consortium (TMGC) — comprising representatives from Lord's, the Oval, Headingley, Old Trafford, Edgbaston and Trent Bridge — is seeking urgent negotiations.

While this delicate issue, potentially among the most divisive in county cricket this century, is unlikely to be resolved at the First Class Forum today, a progress report is likely to overshadow decisions taken on other matters.

Members of the TMGC will discuss their strategy over breakfast this morning, prepared to compromise on specifics but not on the principle that they merit a greater share of resources to pay for the upkeep of facilities used almost entirely for big games.

They intend to resist a reduction of commission on ticket sales from 12.5 to 7.5 per cent and also want more of the revenue collected centrally through broadcasting rights and sponsorship. At present, all 18 counties receive an equal core grant.

This dispute comes at a time when the Board has been forced to cut a projected rise in profits distributed to the counties from 15 to five per cent because of a shortfall of at least £7.5 million in projected receipts. This has been caused by the failure to secure eight main sponsors for the World Cup — only four have been signed up — and by the structuring of the £103 million television deal with Channel 4 and Sky TV.

Jim Cumbes, the Lancashire chief executive, said: "The Board has always tried to pitch the Test against the non-Test grounds when really it is a matter between the Test grounds and the Board. The cost of staging Test cricket is climbing and we can no longer afford to finance that. We do not want to go as far as refusing to stage the games, but it has not been said idly."

Failure to resolve the issue — Cumbes believes the end of April is the absolute deadline for an agreement — would carry enormous consequences.

Because English domestic cricket is dependant on income from Tests, it is in the interests of all that international matches are staged at the biggest venues. There would also be serious logistical difficulties, as well as the possibility of legal action from dissatisfied customers who have already bought tickets, if the series against New Zealand had to be staged away from the recognised Test venues.

The most interesting vote at the meeting could come over a proposal to abandon the toss in championship matches this season, to allow the visiting captain the choice of whether to bat or bowl. Such a system operated from 1774 to 1809, when the away side also selected the pitch. There is concern that by producing surfaces conducive to their own strengths, the counties have contributed to a gradual deterioration in technique.

It seems that a year cannot pass without further tinkering to the structure. A mooted regional competition played over 25 overs per side from the year 2000 at least has a certain attraction as the game tries to broaden its appeal, not least because it will mirror much of the cricket played at secondary school and junior club level. Games are projected to run from 5pm to 8.30pm.

The expansion of the National League — the two-division replacement for the Sunday League — from 16 to 20 games, and the return of the Benson and Hedges Cup, supposedly put to rest last season, make far less sense. Counties must weigh corporate opportunities against the increased demands on players.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Indiana 82 Atlanta 83; Dallas 101 Seattle 109; Denver 100 Los Angeles Clippers 88; Los Angeles Lakers 116 Vancouver 98

CRICKET

One-day international

New Zealand v South Africa

WELLINGTON (South Africa won toss): Match abandoned

SOUTH AFRICA

G Kirsten st Parore b Larsen	45
H H Gibbs b Nash	47
J H Kallis b Astle	54
D J Cullinan c Bulfin b Astle	40
L Klusener not out	35
*W J Cronje not out	18
Extras (lb 10)	10
Total (4 wkts, 48.4 overs)	249

J N Rhodes, S M Pollock, †M V Boucher, N J Boje and S Elworthy did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-84, 2-111, 3-182, 4-205

BOWLING: Allott 8.4-1-46-0; Bulfin 6-1-45-0; Nash 5-0-32-2; Larsen 10-1-28-1; Vettori 10-0-37-0; Harris 3-0-19-0; Astle 6-0-33-2.

Umpires: R S Dunne and E A Watkin.

Pepsi Cup

India v Sri Lanka

PUNE (Sri Lanka won toss): India beat Sri Lanka by five wickets

INDIA

S Ramesh c De Silva b Upashantha	24
S C Ganguly c Tillekeratne b Chandana	65
R Dravid c Ranatunga b Wickremasinghe	17
*A D Jadeja not out	103
A R Khurasiya c Chandana b Wickremasinghe	57
R R Singh c Tillekeratne b Wickremasinghe	0
A B Agarkar c sub b Vaas	1
†N R Mongia not out	6
Extras (lb 7, w 5, nb 1)	13
Total (6 wkts, 50 overs)	286

A Kumble, N Chopra and J Srinath did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-43, 2-65, 3-143, 4-267, 5-272, 6-277.

BOWLING: Vaas 10-1-53-1; Wickremasinghe 10-1-38-2; Upashantha 10-1-52-2; Kalpage 6-0-44-0; Chandana 8-0-45-1; Jayawardene 6-0-48-0

SRI LANKA

A Gunawardene c Kumble b Srinath	10
M S Atapattu c Ganguly b Agarkar	6
D P M Jayawardene c Mongia b Singh	30
P A de Silva run out	55
W P U J C Vaas c Kanitkar b Singh	0
*A Ranatunga run out	25
U D U Chandana c Jadeja b Agarkar	22
†H P Tillekeratne not out	28
R S Kalpage c Mongia b Srinath	13
K E A Upashantha b Agarkar	15
G P Wickremasinghe b Kumble	2
Extras (b 2, lb 6, w 10, nb 11)	29
Total (45.5 overs)	235

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-20, 2-21, 3-78, 4-84, 5-146, 6-146, 7-185, 8-214, 9-231

BOWLING: Srinath 10-1-44-2; Agarkar 10-0-35-3; Kumble 7.5-0-31-1; Chopra 8-0-53-0; Singh 10-0-45-2; Ganguly 4-0-19-0.

Umpires: V N Kulkarni and B K Sadashiva.

ETON FIVES

SHREWSBURY: Schools competition: Open: Semi-finals: St Olave's I (J P Troop and S K P Cooley) bt Highgate I (J N Neophyton and A S Varma) 12-0, 12-5, 13-10; Eton I (O G C Broome and C W Sorrell) bt Harrow I (T G Dunbar and R J Wilcox) 12-6, 12-10, 2-12, 9-12, 12-8. Final: St Olave's I bt Eton I 9-12, 12-9, 12-6, 12-8. Under-16: Semi-finals: Highgate I (Varma and H Young) bt St Olave's I (P M Cohen and P Samrah) 12-4, 13-10, 12-5; Highgate II (O D Rodwell and S S Ahmed) bt Shrewsbury I (J J Walters and D Beasant) 14-3, 12-5, 12-8. Final: Highgate I bt Highgate II 14-12, 12-6, 12-8. Under-15: Semi-finals: King Edward's, Birmingham I (S F G Purkis and C J Mellor) bt Shrewsbury I (J N Attree and H P Clive) 12-9, 12-4; Eton I (R C Wallace and A Outari) bt Shrewsbury II (J J W Street and E H P Edsell) 12-4, 12-4. Final: Eton I bt King Edward's I 14-15, 12-9, 12-9, 12-2. Under-14: Semi-finals: Harrow I (P R Dunbar and F J Milln) bt Berkhamsted I (R J Bartholomew and A R E Page) 12-3, 12-3, 12-0; Highgate I (R M Savitz and D C Goldschmidt) bt Highgate Junior I (A Patel and C Hajipapas) 7-12, 12-7, 5-12, 12-6, 12-8. Final: Harrow I bt Highgate I 12-6, 12-4, 12-8. Under-12: Semi-finals: Highgate Junior I (T Rodwell and J Bicknell) bt Berkhamsted I (T A Baker and F T S Rodwell) 12-4, 12-3; Summer Fields I (T Cox and J Bingham) bt Highgate Junior II (M Elkin and R Sinton-Hewitt) 12-5, 3-12, 12-7. Final: Highgate Junior I bt Summer Fields I 12-10, 12-1. Beginners: Semi-finals: Eton I (J P Sherrard and A W A Barker) bt Shrewsbury II (M O Boyd and A B E Bruce) 12-6, 12-0; Shrewsbury I (A M McKeever and A M Evans) bt Shrewsbury III (B W B Carson and S R Robertson) 15-14, 12-8. Final: Eton I bt Shrewsbury I 12-7, 12-9. Women: Semi-finals: Bullers Wood I (E Tadman and K White) bt Ipswich I (K van den Berg and E Fletcher) 12-2, 12-0; St Olave's I (A Wells and M Rees) bt Eaton Norwich I (S Ishmael and K Rymarz) 12-5, 12-6. Final: Bullers Wood I bt St Olave's I 12-4, 12-0

FOOTBALL

Monday's late results

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Emley 1 Runcorn 1

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Worcester 1 Boston 0.

RYMAN LEAGUE: Puma Cup: Semi-final: Purfleet 0 Worthing 1

THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE YOUTH ALLIANCE: First division: Mansfield 1 Port Vale 2, Scarborough 1 Chester 1.

FA PREMIER ACADEMY LEAGUE: Under-19: Fulham 1 Southampton 2. Under-17: Fulham 4 Southampton 0

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Arsenal 3 Luton 1, Northampton 0 Queens Park Rangers 4. Postponed: Millwall v Charlton.

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Leicester 2 Stoke 0, Nottm Forest 0 Liverpool 2. Second division: Newcastle 2 York 2, Notts County 1 Stockport 1. Third division: Walsall 4 Darlington 0

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTH LEAGUE: Division One: Bedlington 6 Jarrow Roofing 1

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Keynsham 0 Taunton 0.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): New York Rangers 3 New York Islanders 1; Vancouver 1 Phoenix 0

RUGBY UNION

FIRA WORLD JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP: First division: Scotland 37 Uruguay 12, Wales 29 Argentina 5, Japan 16 Romania 18, Ireland 24 Italy 15; France 24 South Africa 33, England 89 Poland 3; Georgia 7 Chile 11

SNOOKER

TELFORD: World championship: Seventh qualifying round (England unless stated): S O'Connor (Ire) bt D Gray 10-5, P Lawler bt N Terry 10-3, M Davis bt C Shade (Scot) 10-4, L Griffin bt L Walker (Wales) 10-8; P Sweeny bt W Thorne 10-0, N Walker bt D Taylor (N Ire) 10-3, S James bt C Harrison 10-5, C MacGillivray (Scot) bt T Chappel (Wales) 10-8, G Greene bt L Richardson 10-3, A Burden bt D O'Kane (NZ) 10-4, C Scanlon bt S Ali (Pak) 10-7

TENNIS

SUNDERLAND: Girobank Tour: Men: Second round: S Harston (Essex) bt S Fulcher (Norfolk) 7-5, 6-0; P Hand (Berks) bt M Eltames (Essex) 7-6, 6-3. Women: Second round: L Perkins (Durham and Cleveland) bt J O'Donoghue (Lancs) 3-6, 6-1, 6-3; C Udota (Nigeria) bt L Collinson (Oxon) 6-1, 6-3; N Trinder (Northumberland) bt N Woodhouse (Norfolk) 6-4, 6-2

SOUTH CAROLINA: WTA Family Circle Cup: First round: N Zvereva (Bela) bt K Hrdlickova (Cz) 7-5, 6-1; G Leon Garcia (Sp) bt S Cacic (US) 6-3, 6-3; R Grande (It) bt A Stevenson (US) 2-6, 6-4, 7-5; E Makarova (Russ) bt L Neiland (Lat) 6-4, 6-0; I Majoli (Cro) bt E Gagliardi (Switz) 7-5, 5-7, 6-4; S Plischke (Austria) bt B Rittner (Ger) 6-3, 6-2; M A Sanchez Lorenzo (Sp) bt T Panova (Russ) 4-6, 6-4, 6-3; I Spirlea (Rom) bt A Smashnova (Isr) 7-5, 6-3; C Martinez (Sp) bt A Fusai (Fr) 6-0, 6-0; A Glass (Ger) bt M Serna (Sp) 6-0, 3-6, 6-3; H Nagyova (Slovakia) bt F Zuluaga (Col) 6-7, 6-4, 6-4; C Cristea (Rom) bt A Gersi (Cz) 7-6, 6-2; V Ruano Pascual (Sp) bt E Tatarkova (Ukr) 6-2, 6-4; P Suarez (Arg) bt M Vento (Ven) 5-7, 7-5, 6-1

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.45 unless stated

European championship

Qualifying group one

Italy v Belarus
Switzerland v Wales (7.15)

Group two

Latvia v Greece (4.30)
Postponed: Slovenia v Albania.

Group three

Germany v Finland (7.30)
Moldova v Northern Ireland (5.0)

Group four

France v Armenia
Russia v Andorra (4.0)
Ukraine v Iceland (5.0)

Group five

Luxembourg v Bulgaria (7.0)
Poland v Sweden (7.30)

Group six

San Marino v Spain (8.20)

Group seven

Azerbaijan v Romania (4.0)
Liechtenstein v Portugal (7.30)
Slovakia v Hungary (5.0)

Group eight

Postponed: Croatia v Malta; Yugoslavia v FYR Macedonia.

Group nine

Lithuania v Estonia (4.0)
Scotland v Czech Republic (at Celtic Park, 8.0)

Nationwide Conference

Forest Green v Hednesford

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Southern division: St Leonards v Andover. Midland division: RC Warwick v Redditch, Solihull Boro v Cinderford. League Cup: Semi-final, second leg: Sutton Coldfield (2) v Boston (2) (7.30)

UNIBOND LEAGUE: First division: Congleton v Netherfield Kendal

RYMAN LEAGUE: Second division: Banstead v Harlow (7.30). Third division: Tring v East Thurrock.

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Brentford v West Ham (7.0), Brighton v Bournemouth (7.0), Cambridge v Fulham (2.0), Ipswich v Colchester (7.0), Peterborough v Barnet (7.0), Portsmouth v Southampton (7.30); Swindon v Chelsea (7.15)

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Birmingham v Blackburn (7.15). First division: Bolton v Oldham (at Reebok Stadium, 7.0), Middlesbrough v Manchester City (7.0); Port Vale v Barnsley (7.0), West Bromwich v Tranmere (7.0). Second division: Huddersfield v Wrexham (7.0); Lincoln v Notts County (2.0), Shrewsbury v Stockport (7.0). Third division: Carlisle v Hull (2.0), Halifax v Darlington (2.0), Hartlepool v Chester (2.0), Wigan v Rochdale (2.0)

FA PREMIER ACADEMY LEAGUE: Under-19: Arsenal v Crystal Palace (at London Colney, 11.0), Middlesbrough v Nottingham Forest (12.0), Newcastle v Derby (2.0)

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTH LEAGUE: First division: Bedlington Terriers v Seaham Red Star

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Hassocks v Redhill

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bideford v Elmore.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: Premier division: Cray v Faversham, VCD v Whitstable Town.

SCHWEPPES ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Bowers United v Brentwood, Eton Manor v Hullbridge Sports.

HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Deveronvale v Peterhead (8.0), Huntly v Buckie Thistle (7.30)

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Islington St Marys v Buckingham Athletic (8.0)

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Bustleholme v Walsall Wood, Darlaston v Westfields, Ettingshall v Kington Town

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Cowes Sports v Hamble ASSC, Moneyfields v Brockenhurst

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: S and L Corby v Long Buckby

NORTH WESTERN TRAINS LEAGUE: First division: Leek CSOB v Skelmersdale

OTHER MATCH: Scarborough v Tromso (Nor) (7.15)

RUGBY UNION

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP: First division: Newcastle v London Scottish (7.30)

WELSH LEAGUE: Premier division: Newport v Pontypridd (7.0)

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Edinburgh Rocks v Birmingham Bullets (8.0)

HOCKEY: BUSA games (at Loughborough Univ): Men: Wales v Northern Ireland (10.30), England v Scotland (2.30). Women: Wales v Northern Ireland (9.0), England v Scotland (12.30)

World champion confident of staging repeat in Hong Kong



Hickman believes he can become the first to break 51 seconds for the 100 metres butterfly in the world short-course championships this week

Hickman's chances improved by pooling of resources

FROM CRAIG LORD IN HONG KONG

JAMES HICKMAN has turned up at the Coliseum here to defend his world title, only to find that he will race in the same stainless steel pool in which he claimed his 200 metres butterfly crown in Sweden two years ago.

"It's amazing," the double world short-course record-holder said yesterday, casting an eye round the freshly shipped-in pool with the excitement of a child in a sweet shop.

"It's like virtual reality — I'm back in Gothenburg. It really helps with the visualisation technique I use before racing — I always think back in my mind to winning in '97, bringing back that winning feeling."

The 100,000-tonne pool, the steel walls of which were made by Avesta Steel in Sheffield and can withstand a pressure of two tonnes per square metre, will host the fourth world short-course championships from tomorrow to Sunday after its three-week voyage by container from Sweden to Hong Kong.

It took less time — five days — to hoist the pool onto steel and concrete stilts at the Coliseum, tighten the 2,000 screws that hold the tank together and have the fire brigade pump in 922,400 litres of treated water.

However, the manufacturers, Invarmex of Sweden, must surely have been disappointed by that pace of work. In Gothenburg in 1997, it took the Swedes just 67½ hours to complete the task — a record for erecting a competition swimming pool.

And all because swimming executives love to save money and boldly go to exotic places where their sport has never been before. Cities wishing to host the world short-course championships need no longer budget in a new £5 million facility. Instead, they can hire a pool for a little over £100,000. It costs a further £320,000 to build.

Such mobility not only allows swimming events to be staged in 10,000-seater auditoriums, such as that here, a rare capacity for 25-metre pools, but also allows them to be put on anywhere. The NEC in Birmingham, for example, is already a candidate for the world championships.

There is one risk — leakage. The plastic floor-lining of the pool is semi-porous, or "like a skin", according to Invarmex, allowing thousands of litres of water through the structure every day. However, the leakage, no different to that which spills over into the level-deck channels at poolside, is then pumped back into the tank.

"It's wonderful," Ronnie Wong, chairman of the organising committee of the championships, said. "The pool was shipped over, we started work on March 15, the foundation was built in three days and then it took five days to put the pool up and set up the pumps for filtration and so on. On Monday the pool will be dismantled, the water will be dechlorinated and emptied into the sea and the whole thing sent back to Sweden."

The Coliseum's temporary conversion to a swimming pool has transformed it into a replica of the Gothenburg stadium where Hickman won his title in 1997. Since then, the Stockport-born and Leeds-coached swimmer has become the Commonwealth champion at 200 metres butterfly, the European short-course champion over 100 and 200 metres and the world record-holder over both distances (51.02sec and 1min 51.76sec respectively) in a 25-metre pool.

Yesterday he predicted that he would set "personal best times", world records to mere mortals, over both 100 metres (final on Friday) and 200 metres (Saturday).

He said: "I'd love to be the first man to clock a 50-point on the 100. It could come. I was excited when I got here. Seeing the pool, talking about the venue, the race, gives me goose bumps. I think of this place and think of my swims in terms of entertainment. I want to entertain people and you can't get a much better place to do that than here. The heats are the rehearsal, the finals the main show."

Doctors challenge drugs action

THE 11 doctors, including nine eminent professors, who form the medical committee of Fina, swimming's world governing body, will today challenge a motion to make them redundant (Craig Lord writes).

At an extraordinary congress called to agree tighter anti-drugs rules on the eve of the world short-course championships here, Fina will propose that its medical committee should be disbanded in favour of forming a doping control review board, composed of experts in such specialist fields as endocrinology and clinical pharmaceutics.

However, the wording of the proposal and the intention to appoint experts immediately means that none of the members of the medical committee could be included. Gunnar Werner, the honorary secretary of Fina, explained: "This is a totally technical matter. There has been no regard to persons. We want it unbiased. These people must be lawyers and doctors trained to deal with the doping issue."

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 42

TATTERDEMALION
(c) A person in ragged clothing. A ragged or beggarly fellow. A ragamuffin. Probably from tattered with a factitious element suggesting an ethnic or descriptive derivative. "Among so many millions of people, should thou and I only be miserable tatterdemalions."

TOHACK
(b) To hack to pieces. Old English and Teutonic. "Take a knuckle of young Veale and all tohack it."

UPLONG
(a) A strengthening bar extending along the sail of a windmill. A portmanteau of up and long. "There ought to be three uplongs to the driving, and two to the leading side, to strengthen the lattice."

TARBOOSH
(c) A cap of cloth or felt (almost always red) with a tassel (usually of blue silk) attached ast the top, worn by Mohammedans either by itself or as part of the turban. The fez is the Turkish form. Transliteration of the Arabic. "Turks Islands derive their name from a bautiful scarlet cactus, in shape like a fez or tarboosh."

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE
1 Bxf7+! Qxf7 2 Rd8+ Rxd8 3 Qxd8+ Qf8 4 Qxf8 checkmate.

TELEVISION CHOICE

New Romantic comedy

Hunting Venus
ITV, 9pm

Martin Clunes directs and stars in Nick Vivian's comedy/drama, a chunky, economical and politically sound satire which is funny, well observed and painfully well played. The members of a long-disbanded 1980s pop group, one-hit wonders The Venus Hunters, have to be rounded up within three days to appear on a Jools Holland television show reuniting great names from the era, including Duran Duran, Spandau Ballet, Gary Numan and the Human League. The driving force are their former fanclub organisers (Jane Horrocks and Esther Coles). Clunes (a selfless, wonderfully sustained performance) is the leader, for whom cheating has always been a way of life and who is now a conman on the run. Neil Morrissey plays a singer now very firmly in touch with his feminine side, and Mark Williams (of *The Fast Show*) the nerdish keyboard player, now an IT tycoon.

Martin Clunes directs and stars in *Hunting Venus* (ITV, 9pm)

Omnibus: Laughter in the House
BBC1, times vary

In the second of three films about British sitcoms, we have reached the 1970s. *Love Thy Neighbour* is defended against charges of racism by the actor Jack Smedley, who now looks more Boer than boor. On *Rising Damp*, Don Warrington's lordly approach almost puts you out of sympathy with the character he played in that terrific series. It's nice to see *Butterflies* credited with changing attitudes to women at home, and extracts from *Fawlty Towers* and *The Good Life* are welcome, but clips from *The Liver Birds*, *Man About the House*, *The Likely Lads* and *Are You Being Served?* mainly confirm that not all humour is ageless.

My Titanic
Channel 5, 8pm

Near-death experiences make good reading and viewing: we can all imagine undergoing such traumas and the increase in travel for business and pleasure means that we are more likely to be exposed to the (statistically minute) risk of crashes, sinkings and the like. Hence such series as this. Tonight, survivors of the Kegworth British Midland air crash, the Watford rail collision and the sinking of the *Estonia* ferry talk about their experiences. Thanks to the Swedish rescue service's film crews, who recorded the operation to retrieve passengers from half-submerged liferafts in the freezing Baltic, the *Estonia* sequence makes the best pure television.

ER
Channel 4, 9pm

The English doctor in Chicago, Alex Kingston, goes before an audience of her peers after her near-fatal slip-up. She admits responsibility but insists on sharing it and, later, confronts her colleague and lover, demanding something like closure. The main storyline is a constantly surprising one involving two small boys and what they were doing in the park during school hours. The 100th anniversary of the hospital, a touring family party of honoured guests and the exhausted attempts of the staff (George Clooney and Anthony Edwards, in particular, are subtly excellent) to maintain a social and home life, make up the rest of a dense and typically satisfying hour. **Tony Patrick**

RADIO CHOICE

South by Southwest
Radio 2, 7pm

South by Southwest bills itself as the largest arts festival in Texas, which may sound a bit like Lincoln City calling itself the best football team in Lincolnshire. In fact, as I discovered on a visit to Austin, arts festivals sprout like oil wells on the Texan landscape and South by Southwest is undoubtedly impressive, not least because of its range: music, film and multimedia events. But music was its original impetus and remains the biggest part of the festival, as this programme fronted by Nick Barraclough, Mike Harding and Bob Harris demonstrates. No American festival would be complete without seminars: a recent one at South by Southwest was called How to Keep Band Members from Tearing Each Other Apart.

Afternoon Play: The Red Room
Radio 4, 2.15pm

Third and last in the series of drama documentaries about writers and the spaces which have inspired some of their finest work. The format, a combination of biographical commentary and drama, has worked extremely well and today's example is perhaps the best of the three. The biographer Glyn Hughes is the writer and Lucy Gough the dramatist for the story of Charlotte Brontë's time spent at the bedside of her father, who had gone to Manchester for a cataract operation. Brontë sat in the necessarily darkened room where the operation took place and scribbled the bulk of *Jane Eyre*, the writing greatly inspired by the end of a love affair and the rejection of her novel *The Professor*. **Peter Barnard**

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Kevin Greening **12.00** Jo Whiley **2.00pm** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Chris Moyles **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Dave Pearce **8.00** Steve Lamacq: The Evening Session **10.00** Movie Update with Mark Kermode **10.10** John Peel **12.00** Gilles Peterson **2.00am** Clive Warren **4.00** Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00** Jimmy Young **2.00pm** Ed Stewart **5.05** Johnnie Walker **7.00** South by Southwest. See Choice **9.00** Giants of Soul (2/8) **10.00** Top of the Pops 2 on 2 **10.30** Richard Allinson **12.00** Katrina Leskanich **3.00am** Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast **9.00** Brian Hayes **12.00** The Midday News with Allan Robb **1.00pm** Ian Payne **4.00** Drive **7.00** News Extra **7.30** John Inverdale's Football Night. Action from tonight's Euro 2000 qualifiers, including Scotland's home tie with the Czech Republic, the clash between Switzerland and Wales, and Northern Ireland's trip to Moldova. Plus, the National Lottery draw **10.00** Littlejohn **11.00** Late Night Live with Nick Robinson **1.00am** Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast **9.00** Scott Chisholm & Sally James **12.00** Let's Talk Pets **1.00pm** Anna Raeburn **4.00** The Sports Zone **7.00** Off Side with Sebastian Coe **8.00** The Big Issues **10.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

VIRGIN

6.30am Russ Williams **9.30** Mark Forrest **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **6.45** Pete and Geoff **10.00** Gary Davies **1.00am** Richard Allen **4.30** Phil Kennedy

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** World News **7.15** Outlook **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** World Business Report **8.15** Insight **8.30** Sports International **9.00** World News **9.05** Westway **9.20** Off the Shelf: Badland **9.35** One Planet **10.00** World News **10.05** Sounds Right **10.20** Blues World **10.50** Sports Round-Up **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Britain Today **11.45** World Business Report **12.00** Newsdesk **12.30pm** Sports International **1.00** World News **1.05** Outlook **1.45** Sports Round-Up **2.00** Newshour **3.00** World News **3.05** One Planet **3.30** Meridian Live **4.00** World News **4.05** Sports Round-Up **4.15** From Our Own Corre spondent **4.30** Jazzmatazz **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Insight **6.00** Newsdesk **6.30** Performance **6.45** Sports Round-Up **7.00** World News **7.15** Britain Today **7.30** Sports International **8.00** World News **8.05** One Planet **8.30** From Our Own Correspondent **8.45** Off the Shelf: Badland **9.00** Newshour **10.00** World News **10.05** World Business Report **10.20** Britain Today **10.30** On Screen **11.00** World News **11.15** Sports Round-Up **11.30** Andy Kershaw's World of Music **12.00** World News **12.05am** Outlook **12.45** Insight **1.00** The World Today **1.30** One Planet **1.55** My Century **2.00** The World Today **2.30** Meridian Live **3.00** The World Today **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today **4.20** Sports Round-Up **4.30** The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast **8.00** Henry Kelly. The *Hall of Fame Hour and CD of the Week* **12.00** *Lunchtime* Requests. Jane Jones spins listeners' favourites **2.00pm** Concerto. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (Guitar Concerto No 1 in D major) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Including Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance **6.30** Newsnight. Headlines, arts news and guests **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven **9.00** Evening Concert. Bach (Cello Suite No 3 in C major); Henryk Wieniawski (Violin Concerto No 1 in F sharp minor); Beethoven (String Quartet in F major); Bruch (Concerto for Violin and Viola with Orchestra) **11.00** Mann at Night **2.00am** Concerto. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (Guitar Concerto No 1 in D major) (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths. The Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 3

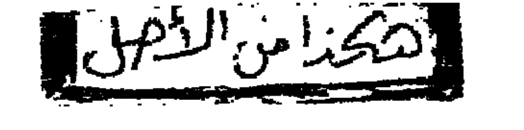
6.00am On Air Penny Gore presents arts news and music, including Elgar's *Serenade for strings* conducted by Richard Hickox
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Rebel (Les elemens); Milhaud (Suite: Scaramouche); Canteloube (Songs of the Auvergne, Series 2); Mozart (String Quartet in D, K575)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Simon Rattle
11.00 ***Sound Stories: Five Music Critics*** Keller
12.00 Composer of the Week: Reger
1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Another chance to hear from last year's Cheltenham Festival. Florestan Trio (r)
2.00 The BBC Orchestra BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Tadaaki Otaka, Emanuel Ax, piano. Strauss (Don Juan); Brahms (Piano Concerto No 2 in B flat); Glazunov (Symphony No 8 in E flat)
4.00 Choral Evensong Live from Westminster Abbey. Acting organist and master of the choristers Martin Baker. Acting sub-organist Philip Scriven
5.00 ***In Tune*** *Sean Rafferty talks to James MacMillan* about his new cycle of works for Easter
7.30 Performance on 3 Live from the Festival Hall, London. The first concert in Radio 3's *Endless Parade* — a celebration of British music since the War. Richard Causton (Millennium Scenes); (Benjamin Britten (Four Sea Interludes from Peter Grimes); Harrison Birtwistle (Endless Parade) **8.20** The British Renaissance **8.40** Concert, part two. Tippett (The Vision of St Augustine)
9.40 Postscript: Rereading Auden (3/5) (r)
10.00 Ensemble In the final programme of the series, Penny Gore introduces a selection of performances by artists featured in recent programmes. Brahms (Intermezzos in B minor, Op 119 No 1; in C, Op 119 No 3): Alexander Taylor, piano. Baermann, attrib Wagner (Adagio for clarinet and strings): Gaudier Ensemble. Janacek (*String Quartet No 2, Intimate Letters*): Endellion Quartet. Khachaturian, arr Heifetz (Sabre Dance): Nicola Loud, violin, Sam Haywood, piano
10.45 Night Waves Laura Cumming explores the way the metro, subway and underground systems of the world's cities have inspired writers and artists
11.30 Jazz Notes Alyn Shipton talks to Putte Wickman, who leads his quartet in concert as part of the recent Swedish Jazz Festival
12.00 Composer of the Week: Schubert (r)
1.00am Through the Night 1.00 The organists Primoz Ramovs and Maks Strmcnik play their *Variations on the Credo* **2.10** Hindemith (Trauermusik) **2.20** Schumann (Symphony No 1 in B flat, Spring **3.10** Ives (Piano Sonata No 2, Concord) **4.00** Stamitz (Clarinet Concerto No 10 in B flat) **4.15** Saint-Saens (The Swan, Carnival of the Animals) **4.20** Koshkin (Alighting of Birds) **4.30** Johann Strauss, son (Vienna Blood) **4.50** Barber (Adagio for strings) **5.10** Melartin (Songs from the Lake Ladoga Suite) **5.10** 15th-century anon (The Bordersholm Lament of the Virgin Mary, Part 1)

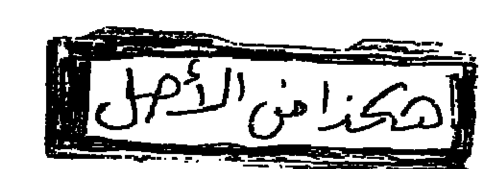
RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today Rural issues, with Anna Hill
6.00 Today with James Naughtie and John Humphrys
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament Round up of political developments
9.00 Midweek with the *Times* columnist Libby Purves
9.45 (LW) Daily Service
9.45 (FM) Serial: Pilate Third extract from Ann Wroe's new book, read by Fiona Shaw
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray and guests, *including part three of High Days, Holy Days*
11.00 Southall Stories Part two. Naresh Puri reports on the clash between traditional and modern influences within Southall's Asian community
11.30 Our Man at Wembley Final episode of the comedy by Bill Matthews. Eric's future looks increasingly uncertain. Alistair McGowan and Jon Glover star (4/4) (r)
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00 (FM) News 12.04pm You and Yours Consumer news and investigations; presented by John Waite and Trixie Rawlinson
1.00 The World at One Introduced by Nick Clarke
1.30 Inspiration! Adam Hart-Davis, Lewis Wolpert, David Martill and Tim Radford join Chris Stuart to explore the world of innovations, discoveries and inventions
2.00 The Archers Yesterday's edition (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: The Red Room See Choice
3.00 Gardeners' Question Time Green-fingered enthusiasts from Dorset pose horticultural queries to experts Bob Flowerdew, Anne Swithinbank and Roy Lancaster (r)
3.30 Rigby's Red Herrings Graeme Rigby's search for superlative preserved fish takes him across the River Tay to retrieve Arbroath smokies for chef Alastair Little (2/4) (r)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Anna Massey narrates part 63 of the history of Britain (r)
4.00 Four Walls Jonathan Glancey explores how architects and designers have created educational establishments (3/4)
4.30 The Larger Map with Laurie Taylor and guests
5.00 PM 6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 King Street Junior Jim Eldridge's comedy drama set in a junior school. The new term begins on a happy note — but will it last? Karl Howman and James Grout star (1/6) (r)
7.00 The Archers
7.15 Front Row Arts programme, with Mark Lawson
7.45 High Days, Holy Days (r)
8.00 The Moral Maze Michael Buerk presents ethical debate, with Janet Daley, Ian Hargreaves, David Cook and David Starkey
8.45 Lent Talks The novelist Rhidian Brook offers his own view of Easter. Last in series
9.00 Under Pressure Brian Cox struggles to finish his experiments before an important conference
9.30 Midweek Broadcast earlier (r)
10.00 ***The World Tonight*** Justin Webb presents
10.45 Book at Bedtime: My Mother's House Janet Suzman reads the third part of Colette's book (r)
11.00 Late Night on 4: Old Harry's Game Andy Hamilton's award-winning comedy, set in Hell, starring James Grout, Jimmy Mulville and Robert Duncan. Another Country (2/6)
11.30 (FM) I'm Glad You Asked Me That Offbeat guide to modern living, with Michael Bywater, Sean Meo and Philip Pope (1/6) (r)
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament Political update (r)
12.00 News 12.30am ***The Late Book: Age of Austerity — Snoek Piquante*** Susan Cooper's essay about the reality of food rationing in post-war Britain (r)
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.56am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089.
Television and radio listings compiled by Perry Cleveland-Peck, Ian Hughes, Gillian Maxey, Jane Gregory and Barry O'Keefe







Has architecture spiralled out of control?

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

For many people, modern architecture is most conveniently defined as any new building to which they take an undefined but instant dislike, much as they might to a woman at a cocktail party who's make-up strikes them as too obvious.

Even architects sometimes have second thoughts (though, paradoxically, it's always the ones that don't have even a first thought who are most in need of a second one). This is why Frank Lloyd Wright envied doctors: he thought they had the advantage of being able to bury their mistakes, whereas an architect can only advise his client to plant vines.

If Daniel Libeskind's Spiral extension for the Victoria and Albert Museum ever gets built, there will be posses of Kensingtonians out there with their trowels planting creepers in a frantic attempt to camouflage its angular walls, which coil upwards like a Cubist cobra. But, frankly, the Spiral is so beguiling that it would look dramatic even clothed in vines. The joy of *Close Up's* **Daniel Libeskind: Welcome to the 21st Century** last night (BBC2) was that its director, Mary Downes, skipped prettily over most of the controversy surrounding this building and captured the flavour of the man instead by focusing both on Libeskind and his family, and on his recently completed Jewish Museum in Berlin.

I'm not clear how architects make money or a reputation, but until the likeable Libeskind won the commission for the Jewish Museum he had never actually built anything — and he's over 50. *Accepting the commission split* his family. Daniel's Polish-born father — who survived the Nazis, though his family didn't — saw the building as a way of commemorating Europe's Jews: we see him celebrating his 90th birthday, beaming with joy — possibly at the fact that his son finally seems to have a proper job. But building a Jewish museum at the former heart of the Third Reich made Daniel's sister and his family uncomfortable.

Reconciling these two views must have been partly what drew Libeskind to the project: "It's a country that's attempting to try to deal with that which can never be dealt with; a past that will never be a past." The result has been such a success that the empty building is now open to inquisitive visitors, even though it will not open with exhibits for another year and a half.

This public passion is something that London — which has been pretty pusillanimous when it comes to modern architecture — should bear in mind when it comes to coughing up for the Spiral: the museum is probably right in thinking that the Spiral could do for London what the Guggenheim has done for Bilbao. If it were built in Paris, we'd feel jealous, and also foolish for having let it slip through our fingers.

The local council's planning committee has passed it, which is enough to make you faint, considering that local council planning committees traditionally show the aesthetic sensibility of tree bark.

It's not clear that the committee's members approved it because they felt that Libeskind's building — designed with the help of the structural engineer Cecil Balmond — was an architectural masterpiece. *So it was left to the architectural writer* Charles Jencks, twirling a cardboard model in his hands, to explain why it is. "With the Spiral we have a new principle of architecture," he said, "because it is a continuous structure which is held together at these points, walls on a wall; the walls are spiralling around itself and so, in a sense, Libeskind and Balmond have reinvented architecture. This is architecture beginning again."

A different strain of family rupture was exposed in **Killer in The Family** (BBC1). Watching Susan O'Keeffe's film was like loitering at the scene of a car crash. You felt voyeuristic, but it was hard to stop listening as the parents of serial killers struggled to convey to an audience they knew would be grimacing how they could still feel anything for their sons.

Betty Scott, Dennis Nilsen's mother, recalls: "I was so hurt that my son had done all these things to people and I couldn't make it right". And yet, she can't just abandon him: "I suppose a lot of people maybe thought it's funny me still lovin' my son. But it's not funny when it's your own. They're always the same person to you."

Peter Sutcliffe's father, John, was on his teabreak at Drummond's Mill in Bradford when he opened a newspaper and realised that he was the Yorkshire Ripper's father: "I had to go into the manager's office and ask him if he'd mind if I went home. 'Cos I wouldn't have been any good at work, the state I was in." And yet he can say: "I love that lad. I don't love him for what he's done. I love him for being who he is."

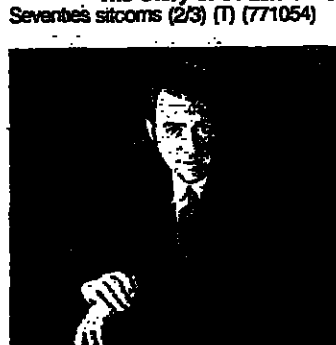
Is it a little ghoulish for O'Keeffe to be soliciting our sympathy for these men and women when it is the victims and *their* relatives who deserve it more? Maybe, but she has uncovered a rare seam of tragedy and mined it sensitively enough to make it seem moving rather than macabre.

One of the rare moments of light relief in Roger Graef's fascinating fly-on-the-wall documentary **The Siege of Scotland Yard** (Channel 4) was watching Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, limbering up for his mauling by the press on publication of the Macpherson report into the Lawrence inquiry by pretending to be Jeremy Paxman.

As a colleague attempted to reply, Condon would interrupt, bang the table and demand an answer. How has poor Jeremy become so misunderstood? Clearly, it's not just institutional racism this country has to be worried about. It's institutional Paxmanism.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (74580)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (36257)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (2035899)
9.45 Style Challenge (7092324)
10.10 The Vanessa Show (T) (7924238)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (3577325)
11.00 Change That (3587702)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (3557561)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (7442899)
12.00 Call My Bluff (98948)
12.30pm Wipeout (4018257)
12.55 The Weather Show (T) (53152257)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (39344)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (59074832)
1.40 Neighbours The camping trip ends in disaster (T) (35114290)
2.05 Through the Keyhole (r) (T) (56905219)
2.35 Midweek Racing from Ascot including coverage of the **2.40**, **3.10** and **3.40** races (2055580)
3.50 CBBC: ChuckleVision (4976677) **4.10** See It, Saw It (5918986) **4.35** The Wild House (3555035) **5.00** Newsround (4210561) **5.10** Blue Peter (9914948)
5.35 Neighbours *(r) (T) (932783)*
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (685)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (615)
7.00 Holiday on a Shoestring Craig Doyle in Brighton, Sankha Guha in New York and Holly Samos in St Tropez (4/6) (T) (9412)
7.30 Tomorrow's World Reports on the discovery of a gene which predisposes people to stomach cancer (T) (899)
8.00 Only Fools and Horses Del gets invited to a school reunion (r) (T) (256073)
8.50 The National Lottery: Greatest Hits with Angela Griffin (T) (183696)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (9493)
9.29 National Lottery Update (640832)
9.30 Jasper Carrott: Back to the Front Last in the series (T) (36696)
10.00 CHOICE **Laughter in the House: The Story of British Sitcom** Seventies sitcoms (2/3) (T) (771054)



Jonathan Ross presents reviews of the latest releases (10.50pm)

10.50 Film 99 with Jonathan Ross Review of *Plunkett and Macleane* (T) (961528)
11.20 The Word on the Street The pleasures and pitfalls of money (4/7) (299325)
11.35 Mr Baseball (1993) Sporting comedy, starring Tom Selleck as a fading baseball *star offered the chance to rejuvenate his* career with a Japanese team. Directed by Fred Schepisi (T) (472122)
1.15am Weather (5089975)
1.20 BBC News 24 (72906468)

10.50 The Slate (T) (915696) **11.30 Film 99 with Jonathan Ross** (T) (98509) **12.00 The Word on the Street** (4/7) (4025623) **12.15am Welsh Questions** (57975) **12.45 FILM: Mr Baseball** (T) (419468) **2.25 News** (T) (5076975) **2.30-6.00 BBC News 24** (2152505)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Polka Dot Shorts (2721035) **7.10** The Silver Brumby (8282069) **7.30** Inch High Private Eye (3930344) **7.55** *The Bots Master* (8801580) **8.20** Buried Treasure (5504054) **8.40** The Really Wild Show (3377899) **9.10** Goober and the Ghost Chasers (8724211) **9.35** Student Bodies (5292342) **10.00** Teletubbies (90967) **10.30** FILM: Huck and the King of Hearts (38696) **12.00** Wildlife Showcase (89290) **12.30pm** *Working Lunch* (47702) **1.00** Brum (68471832)
1.10 The Leisure Hour (3/20) (r) (9427561)
2.10 Sporting Greats (56995832)
2.40 News; Weather (T) (3749122)
2.45 Westminster (T) (5421509)
3.50 News; Weather (T) (6608509)
3.55 Kaye (9931899)
4.25 Ready, Steady, Cook (T) (6610344)
4.55 Esther (r) (T) (5695325)
5.30 Whose House? (764)
6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation The *Enterprise*'s shields are penetrated by an alien probe (r) (T) (628986)
6.45 Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Buffy* announces that her days as a Slayer are over (T) (484899)
7.30 Sophie Grigson's Herbs The cook demonstrates seasonal recipes using edible flowers (T) (141)
8.00 University Challenge Open University take on Birkbeck College (T) (6702)



More fashion and beauty tips introduced by Lowri Turner (8.30pm)

8.30 Looking Good The team offer advice on achieving the gypsy style (T) (2509)
9.00 The Good Life Tom decides that every resource must be utilised — even animal dung (r) (T) (7035)
9.30 Trouble at the Top Cameras follow a group of businessmen as they try to reverse the ailing fortunes of the Pierre Victoire restaurant chain (T) (521986)
10.10 The Car's the Star *E-Type (T) (894851)*
10.30 Newsnight (T) (641509)
11.15 Young Musicians Opportunities for musical development (2/2) (792967)
11.55 Weather (941561)
12.00 Despatch Box (94888)
12.30am BBC Learning Zone: Open *University: A Formidable Foe* **1.00** Sex and the Single Gene? **1.30** The Art of Breathing **2.00** Exam Revision: GCSE Bitesize Revision — Mathematics 1 **4.00** *Languages: Espana Viva!* **5.00** *Business* and Training: So You Want to Work in Social Care? **5.30** 20 Steps to Better Management: Making the Most of *Yourself* **5.45** *Open University: Samples* of Analysis **6.10** Environmental Solutions? **6.35** Large Scale Production

6.45pm The Car's the Star (r) (778073) **7.05 Euro 2000** (24044967) **9.15 University Challenge** (295493) ***9.45 Trouble at the Top*** (511509) **10.25 Turning Points** (524770)

HTV

5.30am ITV Morning News (10870)
6.00 GMTV (5299257)
9.25 Trisha (T) (8421986)
10.30 This Morning (T) (44036580)
12.15pm HTV News (T) (4524122)
12.30 ITV Lunchtime News; Weather (T) (4003325)
12.55 Shortland Street Nick and Rachel get acquainted (9430035)
1.30 Home and Away Natalie makes a shocking discovery (T) (35143702)
1.55 The Jerry Springer Show Outrageous American talk show (T) (1284126)
2.40 Wheel of Fortune (T) (9512734)
3.10 ITV News Headlines (T) (4275219)
3.15 HTV News (T) (4267290)
3.20 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (4288783) **3.30** Teddybears (9248696) **3.40** Jumanji (9909290) **4.05** Hey Arnold! (6691219) **4.35** Wildtrack (3573431)
5.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (4344)
5.30 WEST: Live and Local Richard Wyatt and Polly Lloyd report from a different location in the region each week; HTV Weather (290)
5.30 WALES: Up Beat Pop culture (T) (290)
6.00 HTV News (T) (431)
6.26 HTV Crimestoppers (151257)
6.30 ITV Evening News; Weather (T) (783)
7.00 Emmerdale Mandy is held captive in her own home (T) (4580)
7.30 Coronation Street Ken and Deirdre look to the future (T) (967)

The unusual competition winners Greg and Carla (8pm)

8.00 Two Strangers and a Wedding Part one. Full story of Greg Cordell and Carla Germaine, the competition-winning couple whose prize was to marry each other in an all-expenses-paid ceremony — even though they'd never met. Including the Lottery result (T) (9509)
9.00 CHOICE ***Hunting Venus*** *A* former musician is kidnapped by two diehard fans who blackmail him into reforming his old band (T) (41212528)
10.55 ITV Nightly News; Weather (T) (238948)
11.15 HTV News and Weather (T) (579073)
11.25 Comrades of Summer (1993) An *injured baseball player accepts the task of* coaching an inexperienced Russian team. Comedy, with Joe Mantegna and Michael Lerner. Directed by Tommy Lee *Wallace (725431)*
1.20am Confidential (1986) A reporter is murdered while delving into a 30-year-old murder, prompting a hard-bitten detective to take over the investigation. Thriller, starring August Schellenberg. Directed by Bruce Pittman (932791)
3.05 Trisha Shown earlier (r) (T) (6759178)
4.10 Living A Bug's Life Behind the scenes of the Disney animation (41141064)
4.35 ITV Nightscreen Behind the scenes of *ITV programmes (42628604)*
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (54401)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30pm Central News; Weather (7762290)
12.55 Home and Away (4011344)
1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (4683238)
2.10-2.40 Echo Point (56922986)
3.15-3.20 Central News; Weather (4267290)
5.30 Shortland Street (290)
6.00-6.30 Central News at Six; Weather (431)
11.15-11.25 Central News; Weather (579073)
4.05am Central Jobfinder '99 (8795246)
5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (9921130)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
12.15pm Westcountry News (4524122)
12.27-12.30 Illuminations (7787509)
12.55-1.25 Westcountry Lunchtime Live (4011344)
1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (4683238)
2.10-2.40 Home and Away (56922986)
3.15-3.20 Westcountry News; Weather (4267290)
4.58-5.00 Birthday People (7373141)
5.30 Peter Gorton for Starters (290)
6.00-6.30 Westcountry Live; Weather (431)
11.15-11.25 Westcountry News; Weather (579073)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except:
12.15-12.30pm Meridian News; Weather (4524122)
5.30 Big Day Out (290)
6.00-6.30 Meridian Tonight (431)
7.29-7.30 Meridian Weather (264580)
11.15-11.25 Meridian News; Weather (579073)
5.00-5.30am Freescreen (54401)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (7781325) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (7762290) **5.30-6.00 Whipsnade** (10/13) (T) (290) **6.00-6.30 Anglia News** (T) (431) **11.14 Anglia Air Watch** (179122) **11.15-11.25 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (579073)

S4C

Starts: **6.00am Sesame Street** (r) (88304832) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (67357561) **9.00 FILM: The Kid from Brooklyn** (T) (60940685) **11.05 Travelog Treks** (r) (T) (84989615) **11.30 Powerhouse** (T) (68709141) **12.00 Bewitched** (T) (97595509) **12.30pm Sesame Street** (T) (26313054) **1.00 Planed Plant** (T) (67367948) **1.30 Australia Wild** (T) (97882967) **2.05 FILM: Proud Valley** (T) (79642219) **3.30 Collectors' Lot** (T) (67683832) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One** (T) (67602967) **4.30 Ricki Lake** (T) (67691851) **5.00 Planed Plant** (T) (90683677) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (67615431) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (93931764) **6.10 Heno** (T) (50350290) **6.35 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (31119122) **7.05 Pel-Droed: Y Swistir v Cymru** (39555696) **9.15 Newyddion** (T) (38822509) **9.45 ER** (T) (15178764) **10.40 Brookside** (T) (48410702) **11.15 Sex and the City** (T) (38835073) **11.45 The 11 O'Clock Show** (38834344) **12.15am Michael Moore: The Awful Truth** (T) (14410994) **12.55 F3 on 4** (r) (61830739) **1.25 Football Italia:** *Mezzanotte* (16152401) **3.45 Trans World Sport** (93991246) **4.40 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.40am The Pink Panther (7597764)
5.50 Animal Alphabet (1253832)
5.55 Sesame Street (r) (4756054)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (29967)
9.00 The Kid from Brooklyn (1946) Comedy starring Danny Kaye and Virginia Mayo. Directed by Norman Z McLeod (T) (40516528)
11.05 Travelog Treks (r) (T) (3579783)
11.30 Powerhouse (T) (3696)
12.00 Sesame Street (T) (14986)
12.30pm Bewitched (r) (T) (32870)
1.00 Pet Rescue (T) (22054)
1.30 Little Gems (r) (T) (84426667)
1.50 The Night My Number Came Up (1955) Ealing thriller. Michael Redgrave stars as an airman who finds his *premonition of disaster starting to come* true during a routine flight. With Sheila Sim. Directed by Leslie Norman (T) (75725851)
3.30 Collectors' Lot *(T) (561)*
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (696)
4.30 Countdown (T) (3572702)
4.55 Ricki Lake Guests trade places with their unsympathetic friends (T) (5680493)
5.30 Pet Rescue (T) (832)
6.00 Dawson's Creek Jack reveals his passion for art (T) (604306)
6.50 T4orce A choice selection of the best bits from last week's T4 (644677)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (174035)
7.55 Dovetails Northern editor of the *Sunday World* Jim McDowell reveals how the paper has coped with change in the *aftermath of the Good Friday peace* agreement, now that there are fewer terrorism stories to report (256752)
8.00 Brookside Jackie reaches the end of her tether (T) (1870)
8.30 Doors to Manual Three viewers jet off for a weekend in Paris, but although their destination is the same, each has a different itinerary. Presented by Danny O'Brien (5/6) (T) (7677)

The cast of the award-winning medical drama (9pm)

9.00 CHOICE **ER** Staff celebrate the hospital's 100th anniversary (T) (9515)
10.00 Sex and the City *The gang contemplate* motherhood (T) (15615)
10.30 Michael Moore: The Awful Truth Reports from the US (T) (91035)
11.00 The 11 O'Clock Show Topical comedy with Iain Lee (4948)
11.30 So Graham Norton With Marc Almond (r) (T) (422513)
12.10am Le Petit Package Offbeat French short with a twist in the tale (4032913)
12.25 boardstupid (r) (8245352)
12.55 F3 on 4 (r) (2568710)
1.25 Football Italia: Mezzanotte Round-up of the week's action (33682352)
3.45 Trans World Sport (1223739)
4.40 Soviet Echoes (3/3) (r) (T) (2541791)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport With Becky Anderson (2159342)
7.00 WideWorld Part nine. Two American houses which were *designed in the* 1920s (r) (T) (8463615)
7.30 Milkshake! (2988141)
7.35 Dappledown Farm (r); 5 News Update (4967870)
8.00 Alvin and the Chipmunks (r) (2180493)
8.30 Witchworld; 5 News Update (2189764)
9.00 Hot Property (r) (T) (7216031)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (4749412)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (8586211)
10.20 Sunset Beach Ricardo issues an ultimatum (T) (3936054)
11.10 Leeza (r) (9715603)
12.00 5 News at Noon (T) (2183580)
12.30pm Family Affairs Pam discovers what her big case is about (r) (T); 5 News Update (1561702)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Ridge's *rejection leaves Brooke reeling (T)* (8462986)
1.30 The Roseanne Show Part one. The bubbly comedian talks to fellow chat show host Oprah Winfrey, and challenges her to an arm-wrestling contest to raise money for the winner's favourite charity (1560073)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (9449702)
2.30 Good Afternoon Daily entertainment; 5 News Update (1047290)
3.30 The Return of Frank Cannon (TVM 1980) The detective-turned-restaurateur comes out of retirement to discover the truth about the mysterious death of a friend. Drama, starring *William Conrad*. Directed by Corey Allen (T) (1546847)
5.20 5 News (T) (71793171)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (2786870)
6.00 5 News; Weather Round-up of the day's stories, including *First on Five* (2783783)
6.30 Family Affairs Benji gives in to peer *pressure (T) (2774035)*
7.00 Knight Rider Michael and KITT join forces with a feisty journalist to flush out the saboteurs whose deadly devices are threatening the lives of drivers in a futuristic road race. David Hasselhoff stars (r) (9410290)
7.30 Nature of Oz Wildlife documentary about the Tasmanian tiger (T), 5 News Update (2770219)
8.00 CHOICE **My Titanic** A survivor of the 1994 *Estonia ferry disaster in* which more than 800 people lost their lives describes his experience of being aboard a sinking ship 60 miles from shore (T); *5 News Update (8881509)*
9.00 Scattered Dreams (TVM 1993) Powerful drama set in 1950s America, chronicling the plight of George and Kitty Messenger, a couple wrongly arrested and jailed for unpaid debts at their local store. Tyne Daly and Gerald McRaney star. Directed by Neema Barnette (T); 5 News Update (81548257)
10.50 Euro 2000 Highlights of Northern Ireland v Moldova (8803685)
11.50 The Jack Docherty Show *With* guest Barbara Windsor (8251257)
12.30am Live NHL Ice Hockey Live coverage of the game between Los Angeles Kings *and Detroit Red Wings (1068420)*
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (6165975)

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SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● **For further listings see *Saturday's Vision***

SKY ONE

7.00am Count Duckula (56035) **7.30** *Grimmy (68870)* **8.00** *Earthworm Jim* (20561) **8.30** Godzilla (29832) **9.00** Pokemon (43412) **9.30** The Simpsons (87344) **10.00** Shadow Raiders: Born in Fire (41615) **10.30** Xena: Warrior Princess *(16122)* ***11.30*** *Legend of the Hidden City* (71219) **12.00** Tarzan (77967) **1.00pm** Mad About You (55306) **1.30** Jeopardy (80431) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (42344) **3.00** Jenny Jones (75035) **4.00** Pokemon (4238) ***4.30*** *Shadow Raiders: Born in Fire (3122)* **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager (3493) **6.00** America's Dumbest Criminals (4615) **6.30** Friends (5967) **7.00** The Simpsons (4122) **7.30** The Simpsons (4851) **8.00** Mortal Kombat: Conquest (12054) **9.00** The X Files (92290) **10.00** Miami Uncovered (58667) **11.00** Friends (95889) **11.30** Star Trek: Voyager (34696) **12.30am** Law and Order (62913) **1.30** Long Play (4921333)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels.
To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 51)
Chasing Amy (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60)
Jackie Brown (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59)
Flubber (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58)
Kiss the Girls (1998)

SKY PREMIER

6.00am Jingle All the Way (1996) (70801) **8.00 The Wedding (1997)** (31238) **10.00 Family Plan (1997)** (14881580) **11.50 The Fifth Element (1997)** (50713798) **2.00pm The Wedding (1997)** (24899) **4.00 Jingle All the Way (1996)** (29054) ***5.30 Family Plan (1997)*** (45851) **7.30** Merchant/Ivory: A Partnership in Film (7561) **8.00 The Fifth Element (1997)** (19780) **10.00 LA Confidential (1997)** (27305141) **12.25am Photographing Fairies (1997)** (706739) **2.10 Dead Again (1991)** (888401) **4.00 The Great White Hype (1996)** (73517)

SKY MOVIEMAX

5.30am Looking for Trouble (1995) (22733) **7.00** Movie Magic (6416257) **7.45** Action Heroes (5854219) **8.30** Femmes Fatales (54628) **9.00 Battle for the Planet of the Apes** (1973) (13832) **11.00** *Rockford Files:* **I Still Love LA (1995)** (88948) **1.00** Movie Magic (73702) **1.30** Femmes Fatales (5025528) **2.15** Action Heroes (7160219) **3.00 Something Borrowed, Something Blue (1997)** (38412) **5.00 Rockford Files: I Still Love LA** (1995) (46509) **7.00 Journey to Mars** (1996) (98239) **8.30** E! News in Review (7073) **9.00 Sin and Redemption (1994)** (17509) **11.00 Jackie Chan's First Strike** *(1996) (114580)* **12.25am Tales from the Crypt Presents: Bordello of Blood** (1996) (2000604) **1.55 Until September** (1984) (379468) **3.30 The Last Days of Frankie the Fly** (1996) (749307)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm From Hell to Texas (1958) (7563783) **6.00 Golden Earrings** (1947) (2968832) **8.00 A Guide for the Married Man** (1967) *(2978577)* **10.00 The Kremlin Letter** (1970) (12006870) **12.05am The Great White Hope** (1970) (4156130) **1.50 French Connection II** (1975) (6714401) **3.45 Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll** (1987) (53743130)

FILMFOUR

6.00pm Widows' Peak (1994) (4598306) **8.00 Blue Sky** (1994) (4593851) **10.00 Blow-Up** (1966) *(4649561)* ***11.55 Hollow Reed*** (1995) (3655324) **1.40am Simple Men** (1992) (6544739) **3.25 The Bonfire of the Vanities** (1990) (35406130)

TNT

9.00pm Abbott and Costello in Hollywood (1945) (33393054) **11.00 White Heat** (1949) (68315509) **1.15am Westworld** (1973) (71400362) **3.00 Shaft** (1971) (84957197) *5.00 Close*

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre **7.15** Sports Unlimited *8.15* You're On Sky Sports! **9.00** Inside Racing News **9.30** Aerobics **10.00** Inside Scottish Football **11.00** Fastrax **11.30** Total Sport **12.00** Aerobics **12.30pm** Premier Snooker League **2.30** Fastrax **3.00** Inside Scottish Football **4.00** Boxing Superbouts **5.00** World Pool League **6.00** Sports Centre **6.30** Unbelievable Sports **7.00** Live International Football **10.00** Sports Centre **10.15** You're On Sky Sports! **11.00** World Pool League **12.00** *Sports Centre* **12.15am** You're On Sky Sports! **1.00** International Football **2.30** Rugby League World **4.00** Sports Centre **4.15** *Close*

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics 7.30 Sports Centre 7.45 Racing News **8.15** Fastrax **8.45** Sports Centre **9.00** Fish TV **10.00** Women's Golf **12.00** International Football **2.00pm** Golf Extra **5.00** Sports Unlimited **6.00** Watersports World **7.00** *Golf Extra* **10.00** Rugby League World **11.30** Ringside **1.00am** European Tour Golf Weekly **1.30** Watersports World **2.30** Sports Centre **2.45** Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00am Sports Unlimited **1.00pm** Fish TV **2.00** Tales from the Premiership **2.30** Boxing Superbouts **3.30** Powerboat and Jetsport World **4.00** International Football **6.00** Australian Rally Championship **6.30** European Tour Golf Weekly **7.00** Rugby League World **8.30** Ringside **10.00** FA Cup Final Classics **11.30** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Superbike **9.00** Curling **11.00** Motocross **11.30** Car On Ice **12.00** Motorcycling **12.30pm** Motorcycling **1.00** Equestrianism **2.00** US Golf **3.00** Tennis **3.30** Live Women's Tennis **5.00** Olympic Games **5.30** Start Your Engines **6.30** Strongest Man **7.30** Roller Skating **9.30** Football **11.30** Start Your Engines **12.30am** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads **7.30** Neighbours **7.55** EastEnders **8.30** The Bill **9.30** The House of Eliott **10.30** Rhoda **11.00** Dallas **11.55** Neighbours **12.25pm** EastEnders **1.00** Bugs **2.00** Dallas **2.55** The Bill **3.55** EastEnders **4.30** Rhoda **5.00** All Creatures Great and Small **6.00** Dynasty **7.00** Ever Decreasing Circles **7.40** Last of the Summer Wine **8.20** The Brittas Empire **9.00** One Foot in the Grave **9.40** Catherine Cookson's The Man Who Cried **11.35** The Bill **12.35am** Between the Lines **1.35** Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em **2.25** The Man from Auntie **3.00** *Shopping with Screenshop*

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Within These Walls **7.00** How's Your Father? **7.30** The Odd Couple **8.00** Families **8.30** *Mind Your Language* **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** Emmerdale Farm **10.00** Upstairs, Downstairs **11.00** The Gentle Touch **12.00** Classic Coronation Street **12.30pm** Emmerdale Farm **1.00** Mind Your Language **1.30** Me and My Girl **2.00** Upstairs, Downstairs **3.00** The Love Boat **4.00** The Professionals **5.00** Hart to Hart **6.00** Emmerdale Farm **6.30** Classic Coronation Street **7.00** The Professionals **8.00** The Benny Hill Show **9.00** The Sweeney **10.00** Hale and Pace **10.30** Wheeltappers and Shunters' Social Club **11.00** Granada Men and Motors

Ben Affleck stars in *Chasing Amy*, Kevin Smith's romantic comedy drama about life, love and friendship (Sky Box Office 1)

CARLTON SELECT

5.00pm What's Cooking? **5.30** Gridlock **6.00** My Two Wives **6.30** Our House **7.00** Shine On, Harvey Moon **8.00** Stuck on You **8.30** Superchefs **9.00** Head Over Heels **10.00** Pie in the Sky **11.00** Hill Street Blues **12.00** My Two Wives **12.30am** Gridlock

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Gummi Bears **6.25** Classic Toons **6.35** Tale Spin **7.00** Classic Toons **7.10** Aladdin **7.35** 101 Dalmatians **8.00** Goof Troop **8.25** Classic Toons **8.30** Timon and Pumbaa **9.00** Art Attack **9.35** Doug **10.00** Recess **10.15** Pepper Ann **10.30** Ned's Newt **10.45** Ned's Newt **11.00** Smart Guy **11.30** Teen Angel **12.00** Boy Meets World **12.30pm** Brotherly Love **1.00** Dinosaurs **1.30** Amazing Animals **1.55** New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh **2.10** Bite *Size* ***2.20*** *Bear in the Big Blue House* ***2.45*** New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh **3.00** The Little Mermaid **3.30** Art Attack **4.00** 101 Dalmatians **4.30** Hercules: The TV Show **5.00** Recess **5.15** Pepper Ann **5.30** Smart *Guy* ***6.00*** *Teen Angel* ***6.30*** *Boy Meets World* **7.00 FILM: 101 Dalmatians (1996)** **8.40** Honey I Shrunk the Kids: The TV Show **9.30** Dinosaurs **10.00** Home Improvement **10.30** The Wonder Years **11.00** Touched by an *Angel* ***11.50*** *Classic Toons* ***12.00*** *Close*

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Masked Rider **6.30** Beetleborgs *Metallix* ***6.55*** *Power Rangers Turbo* ***7.45*** Silver Surfer **8.10** Mortal Kombat **8.35** Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book **9.00** Goosebumps **9.25** Eerie, Indiana **9.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **10.00** Goosebumps **10.25** Mad Jack the Pirate **10.40** The Secret Files of the Spy Dogs **10.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **11.00** Goosebumps **11.25** Dennis and Gnasher **11.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **12.00** Goosebumps **12.25pm** The Incredible Hulk **12.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **1.00** Goosebumps **1.25** Fantastic Four **1.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **2.00** Goosebumps **2.25** X-Men **2.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **3.00** Goosebumps **3.30** X-Press **3.35** Spiderman **4.00** Goosebumps **4.25** Hero Turtles: The Next Mutation **5.00** Dennis and Gnasher **5.30** Ace Ventura **6.00** Donkey Kong Country **6.30** EektStravaganza **6.55** Oggy and the Cockroaches **7.00** Close

NICKELODEON

6.00am Brothers Flub **6.30** Brothers Flub ***7.00*** *Aaahh! Real Monsters* ***7.30*** *Aaahh! Real Monsters* **8.00** Catdog **8.30** Catdog **9.00** Rugrats **9.30** Rugrats **10.00** The Wild Thornberrys **10.30** The Wild Thornberrys **11.00** Sabrina **11.30** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **12.00** Moesha **12.30pm** Moesha **1.00** Renford Rejects **1.30** Renford Rejects **2.00** Hey Arnold! **2.30** Hey Arnold! **3.00** Rugrats **3.30** Rugrats **4.00** Rugrats **4.30** Sister Sister **5.00** Kenan and Kel **7.00** Close

BRAVO

8.00pm Martial Law **9.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **9.30** Cops **10.00** Late Lounge **10.30** Erotic Confessions **11.00 FILM: National Lampoon's Movie Madness (1981)** **1.00am** Erotic Confessions **1.30** *Late Lounge* **2.00** Martial Law **3.00 FILM: The Fly II (1989)** **5.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **5.30** Cops

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Clueless **7.30** Grace Under Fire **8.00** Ellen **8.30** Spin City **9.00** Drop the *Dead Donkey* ***9.30*** *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* **10.00** Frasier **10.30** Cheers **11.00** Seinfeld **11.30** The Larry Sanders Show **12.00** Late Night with David Letterman **1.00am** It's Garry Shandling's Show **1.30** Nurses **2.00** Dr Katz **2.30** Tibs and Fibs **3.00** Almost Perfect **3.30** Abbott and Costello **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 6pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

7.30am Bloomberg Information Television **8.00** Sightings **9.00** Battlestar Galactica **10.00** Quantum Leap **11.00** Dark Shadows **11.30** *The Ray Bradbury Theatre* **12.00** *The* Twilight Zone **12.30pm** The Twilight Zone **1.00** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.00** Amazing Stories **2.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **3.00** Battlestar Galactica **4.00** The Incredible Hulk **5.00** Sightings **6.00** Time Trax **7.00** Quantum Leap **8.00** VR.5 **9.00** Lexx **10.00 FILM: Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure (1988)** **11.45** Sci-Focus *Special* **12.00** PSI Factor Chronicles of the Paranormal **1.00am FILM: Poltergeist III (1988)** **3.00** Dark Shadows **3.30** Dark Shadows **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Today's Gourmet **6.30** Yan Can Cook — The Best of Asia **7.00** Homemaker **7.30** Period Rooms **8.00** Wedding Story **8.30** A Baby Story **9.00** Simply Painting **9.30** *The Great Gardening Plot* **10.00** Instant Gardens **10.30** Cookabout with Greg and Max **11.00** The Diceman **11.25** The Home and Leisure House **11.30** Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **12.00** Our House Down Under **12.30pm** Antiques Trail **1.00** Our House **1.30** Home Savvy **2.00** New Yankee Workshop **2.30** Home Again with Bob Vila **3.00** This Old House with Steve and Norm **3.30** Charlie West Fishing

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **4.30** A River Somewhere **5.00** Searching for Lost Worlds **6.00** Wildlife SOS **6.30** Born Wild **7.30** Futureworld **8.00** Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious Universe **8.30** Creatures Fantastic **9.00** Neo-Nazi Hunters **9.30** Right on Red **10.00** Casualties of Peace **10.30** From Russia with Love **11.00** Broken Heart **11.30** Comeback City **12.00** The History of Writing **1.00am** Searching for Lost Worlds

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00am *New Adventures of Black Beauty* **12.30pm** Hollywood Safari **1.30** Deadly Australians **2.00** All-Bird TV **2.30** Human/Nature **3.30** Harry's Practice **4.00** Jack Hanna's Animal Adventures **4.30** Animal *Doctor* ***5.00*** *Pet Rescue* ***5.30*** *Deadly* Australians **6.00** The New Adventures of Black Beauty **6.30** Lassie **7.00** Rediscovery of the World **8.00** Animal Doctor **8.30** Horse Tales **9.00** Going Wild **9.30** Emergency Vets **10.00** *Crocodile Hunter* **11.00** Wildlife ER **11.30** Emergency Vets **12.00** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm *Lions in Trouble* ***7.30*** *Mother Bear Man* **8.00** Beauty and the Beast **9.00** The Polygamists **10.00** Don't Even Think of Parking Here **10.30** To Serve and Destroy **11.00** On the Edge: The Last Wild River Ride **12.00** Extreme Earth: Into the Volcano **12.30am** Extreme Earth: Freeze Frame — An Arctic Adventure

HISTORY

4.00pm Vimy: Battle of Vimy Ridge **5.00** Classic Cars: Mercedes **6.00** The Riddle of the Maya **7.00** Story of the Gun: Duel Weapon **7.30** Battleline: Battle of Britain

CARLTON FOOD

9.00am Food Network Daily **9.30** Coxon's Kitchen College **10.00** From the Ground Up **10.30** Nancy Lam's Wok Wiz **11.00** Worrall Thompson Cooks **11.30** Ideal Home Cooks **12.00** *Food Network Daily* **12.30pm** A Year at Ballymaloe **1.00** Coxon's Kitchen College **1.30** An Umbrian Kitchen **2.00** Mridula's Indian Kitchen **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** Loyd's Louisiana **3.30** Ideal Home *Cooks* ***4.00*** *Thoroughly Modern British* **4.30** Simply Baking **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Tiny and Crew **6.20** 10 Plus 2 **6.40** Greedysaurus and the Gang **6.45** Philbert the Frog **6.50** Polka Dot Shorts **7.00** Practical Parenting **7.05** Professor Bubble **7.30** Caillou **7.35** Bug Alert **7.55** Practical Parenting **8.00** Barney and Friends **8.25** *Baboloos* **8.30** Tiny *Tales* ***8.35*** Tiny and Crew **8.50** Practical Parenting **9.00** Special Babies **9.30** The Roseanne Show **10.00** The Jerry Springer Show **10.50** Maury Povich **11.40** Brookside **12.10pm** Through *the Keyhole* ***12.40*** *Rescue 911* **1.10** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **1.40** Maury Povich **2.30** Special Babies **3.00** The Jerry Springer Show **3.50** Michael Cole **4.40** Through the Keyhole **5.10** The Heat Is On ***5.40*** *Ready, Steady, Cook* ***6.15*** *The Jerry* Springer Show **7.05** Rescue 911 **7.35** Animal Rescue **8.00** LA Law **9.00 FILM: Everything to Gain (1997)** **11.00** The Spicy Sex Files **12.00** Close

ZEE TV

5.00am Lolly Pop **5.30** Hey Ha Ho **6.00** Out and About **6.30** Yoodle-Ae-Oo **7.00** Faith, Christian **7.30** News **8.00** India Business Report **8.30** Tara **9.00** Rishtey: The Love Stories **10.00** Sofe **11.00** Aashiana **11.30** Parampara **12.00 FILM** **3.00pm** Zee Bangla **3.30** Hum Paanch **4.00** Akbar Birbal ***4.30*** *Ek Minute* ***5.00*** *Jungle Book* ***5.30*** Mausam **6.00** Top of the Tops **6.30** Banegi Apni Baat **7.00** Baat Ban Jaye **7.30** It's My Choice **8.00** News **8.30** Amanat **9.00** Urdu Drama **10.00** Ikke Pe Ikka **10.30** Woh **11.00** Purukshetra **12.00** News **12.30am** Tandoori Masala **1.00** Bangla TV **1.30** Parmartan **2.00 FILM** **4.30** Narsayo



ROWING 42
Youngest generation is fired by annual obsession

SPORT

SWIMMING 46
Hickman takes heart as he splashes into familiar pool



WEDNESDAY MARCH 31 1999

Doubts cast on England future

Injury forces Atherton out of World Cup

By Richard Hobson

ENGLAND'S preparations for the cricket World Cup suffered their first setback yesterday when Michael Atherton pulled out of the 15-man squad after another recurrence of his back problem. Given the nature of the condition that has caused him to miss three international matches in the past eight months, there is now a serious question over his future at that level.

Atherton told David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, that he was not fit enough to continue, having sat out the first day of practice in Lahore, where England are preparing for a World Cup warm-up tournament in Sharjah next week.

The problem resurfaced when Atherton flew back from Lancashire's pre-season tour of South Africa and on to Pakistan in quick succession. "I have suffered a reaction and I realise I cannot guarantee full fitness," Atherton said.

A final squad has to be lodged with the International Cricket Council today, although there is still provision to make alterations when injuries arise at any stage before or during the tournament. The hope that Atherton could withstand an event spanning up to ten matches in five weeks, despite a problem increasingly prone to flare up at a moment's notice, always seemed optimistic.

That England should have been prepared to take such a risk by choosing their former captain indicated the value placed on his ability to anchor the innings. He was a valuable asset in conditions favouring seam and swing, which mitigate against batsmen happier to hit through the line, and as Graveney discussed a replacement with Graham Gooch and Mike Gatting, his fellow selectors, last night, the lack of another batsman in the same mould and of equal experience became apparent.

Rather than call up Ally Brown, a more flamboyant performer in the one-day game, the selectors may decide that Andrew Flintoff and Vince Wells already provide back-up for Alec Stewart and Nick Knight as openers. Such thinking could lead to a recall for Nasser Hussain, who was unlucky to be omitted in the first instance after his performances in the recent one-day series in Australia.

While his withdrawal is undoubtedly a significant blow, it is better that Atherton, who passed a series of assessments to the satisfaction of Wayne Morton, the England physiotherapist, two weeks ago, has taken the decision so far ahead of the game against Sri Lanka that opens the World Cup on May 14.

"He realised he wasn't doing himself any favours and he was probably going to let the rest of the team down if he tried to pretend he was fit," Morton said. "We appreciate his honesty, but Lahore was always going to be stage two of his fitness test." This remains the case for Graham Thorpe, Neil Fairbrother and Ian Austin. As with Atherton, their selection depended on proving their fitness by March 15.

Atherton, 31, will take further medical opinion on the degenerative condition in the spinal column, known as chronic spondolytis, when he returns home later this week. He is unlikely to feature for Lancashire until the end of May. "I am going to take time out to get fully fit before I play again, but I believe I will get fit and will play again," Atherton said.

His initial target is the first Test match against New Zealand at Edgbaston, allowing little time to find his form at county level. In recent years his returns for Lancashire have been disappointing and it remains to be seen whether his back is able to stand up to the stress of playing day-in, day-out.

Graveney said: "His desire to play for England is as strong as it has ever been and he still feels he has a lot to offer. But as selectors we would need to be convinced over a long period of time that he is pain-free, injury-free, and that he would be performing for Lancashire. We would want to see him play a continuous length of cricket before we went down that path."

Atherton reflects on his decision at the England hotel in Lahore



Lara plays another imperious stroke for four as he plays a captain's innings during West Indies' fightback yesterday

Writers to give Lewis his just reward

By Srikumar Sen
Boxing Correspondent

LENNOX LEWIS can justly claim to be the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world when he receives a special award on April 9 in New York. A belt representing the three titles that Britain's World Boxing Council champion would have held had flawed judging not denied him the verdict against Evander Holyfield at Madison Square Garden on March 13, will be presented to him by his severest critics, the Boxing Writers' Association of America.

They had rubbished Lewis since he suffered his second-round defeat to Oliver McCall five years ago, and the Americans were surprised that Lewis agreed to fly to New York to be the guest of honour at their 74th annual dinner.

Chris Thorne, the chairman of the association, said yesterday: "This is the first belt of its kind and we are delighted to present it to Lennox. The majority of American writers thought he won it and won it big. There can be no doubt that he is the undisputed world heavyweight champion. He should have had all the belts. The whole business left a bad taste in the mouth. We hope that the belts we are going to give him will assuage some of the bitterness."

Tom Kendall, the treasurer of the Boxing Writers' Association, said: "Two years in a row Holyfield has been our Fighter of the Year. We are very happy this time it's Lennox Lewis. He did an excellent job right through to the last round. This award should do a lot for his confidence. He was the real deal."

Lewis, who has always wanted to prove to the Americans that they were wrong in their assessment of his standing in the world, said: "I'm delighted that the boxing writers of America have decided to honour me in this way, because they were all ringside at the Garden and saw what happened.

"If there are any more questions they would like me to answer in the ring, I would be very happy to provide them in the rematch. The sooner we get it on the better."

Lara sets up thrilling finish

THE third Test between West Indies and Australia was thrillingly poised in Barbados yesterday after another brilliant century by Brian Lara, the home captain, took his side tantalisingly close to a memorable victory.

Advantage swung through the final day as West Indies, resuming their second innings on 85 for three, and needing a total of 308 to win, lost early wickets. Gillespie first trapped Griffith, the opening batsman who had defied Australia for more than three hours the previous day, leg-before in the fifth over, then had Hooper caught behind to leave West Indies 105 for five.

That brought Adams to the wicket and for a while, he and Lara wrested back the initiative. The left-handers shared a partnership worth 133, taking advantage of the faltering Australia spin attack to bring West Indies to within 70 runs of victory.

However, McGrath, returning with the new ball shortly before tea, bowled a crucial spell, taking three wickets. Lara had already made his century when Adams, on 38, had his off stump clipped by an outswinger. Jacobs fell leg-before for five soon after, then Perry perished first ball, also leg-before.

At tea, West Indies were 254 for eight, 54 runs short, with Lara and Ambrose at the crease. The four-Test series is level at 1-1.

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TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1679

ACROSS
3 Buddy (3)
8 Green felt (5)
9 Reluctance to move (7)
10 Inebriated (7)
11 Hurt (5)
12 Skilled painter (6)
14 Interfere (6)
15 Vigorous struggle (6)
17 Leave without wind (6)
20 Hilarity (5)
21 Tetanus (7)
24 Acrobat: a glass (7)
25 From the country (5)
26 "— for one, one for —" *(Dumas)* (3)

DOWN
1 Down for the night (4)
2 Card game: a patrol (6)
3 Make (coffee): job benefit (4)
4 Trailing rain-forest plant (5)
5 Lawyers' jargon (8)
6 Eaten out by acid (6)
7 Reverie (8)
12 Robots (8)
13 Sam. Smiles *how to get on* book (4-4)
16 Be parsimonious (6)
18 Swear to leave alone (6)
19 Very (5-): an extremist (5)
22 Twist, twine (4)
23 Join (heated metals) (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1678
ACROSS: 1 Hesitate 5 Oslo 9 The Merry Wives 10 Hero 11 Slender 13 Pistol 15 Simple 18 Shallow 20 Page 23 Alpha and Omega 24 Yell 25 Helsinki
DOWN: 1 Hate 2 Sieve 3 Tremolo 4 Thrush 6 Saved up 7 Observer 8 Twee 12 Apostasy 14 Scalpel 16 Impious 17 Twinge 19 Loam 21 Glean 22 Saki

Sweden seek to maintain ascendancy over England

By Matt Dickinson

THE celebrations over England's revival under Kevin Keegan may be put into context tonight when Sweden travel to Poland with the opportunity to establish a comfortable lead in European championship qualifying group five. Should the Swedes win easily in Chorzow, England's 3-1 victory at Wembley on Saturday will lose much of its gloss.

With three victories already, including their triumph over England, Sweden remain favourites to qualify automatically, a perception that would be greatly enhanced if they were to win tonight. England would then trail the Swedes by five points when the two countries meet at Wembley on June 5, although there is no room for error from Keegan's side in their remaining four qualifiers, whatever the result tonight.

The England coach has returned to his other job as chief operating officer at Fulham, so Derek Fazackerley, his training-ground assistant at Burnham Beeches last week, will act as scout for the Football Association in Poland. The home side will hope to play with more urgency and conviction than they did at Wembley when Janusz Wojcik's team appeared to be suffering from the aftermath of the winter break. Should they triumph over Sweden, they will leap ahead of England.

Also meeting in group five tonight are Luxembourg and Bulgaria, with the latter expected to record their first victory of the campaign. The game may be watched by Peter Taylor, the England Under-21 coach, who was upset to be told by the FA on Monday that his position would be given to Howard Wilkinson, the technical director, in June. Taylor will remain in his post until then.

Wilkinson, who was heavily involved with the senior England team last week, has long felt that he should control the under-21s as part of his overhaul of the coaching of the young international teams, and Glenn Hoddle's dismissal as England coach made Taylor's position vulnerable. Taylor was a former teammate of Hoddle's at Tottenham Hotspur and was appointed by him in 1996.

His record with the under-21s was excellent, culminating in a 5-0 victory over Poland at The Dell last Friday that put them at the top of their group. He said yesterday that he had expected to be pushed as soon as Hoddle departed. "Obviously, I want to stay in the game," Taylor said. "Howard has said he will help me in every way. I will particularly miss the spirit among the squad and staff. I really don't think things could have gone better over the last three years."

Taylor's team lost only four times in 21 games but it was not enough to save him when he met Wilkinson on Monday. "Peter Taylor was offered employment in a technical department with new responsibilities," Wilkinson said yesterday. "These responsibilities were to include coach education and involvement with international teams, which could have included the England under-21s. Peter, however, chose to decline this offer on the basis that he wanted to retain the post of manager of the under-21 team on a permanent basis." That position now goes to Wilkinson, who controls the coaching of all the junior England sides.

GROUP FIVE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	3	3	0	0	5	1	9
England	4	2	1	1	7	3	7
Poland	3	2	0	1	7	3	6
Bulgaria	3	0	1	2	0	4	1
Luxembourg	3	0	0	3	0	8	0

FIXTURES: Today: Luxembourg v Bulgaria, Poland v Sweden.

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